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AUSTRIA IN DISSOLUTION

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Being the Personal Recollections of
STEPHAN, COUNT BURIÁN *von Rajec*
Minister for Foreign Affairs for Austria and
Hungary 1915-1917 and 1918, translated by
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Throughout the book the word "Allies" is used in reference to the Central Powers, their opponents being described as "the Entente."



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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

A HISTORY of the world war under the effects of which our portion of the globe is labouring, can at present be conceived only as a mosaic arranged in a chronological framework containing the impressions of the time, and the accounts of contributory factors, and particularly the statements and revelations of leading personalities in the opposing camps engaged in responsible military or political work. The monstrous events which overwhelmed us bear neither in their entirety nor in the case of either of the two competing groups of Powers individually, the impress of a single dominant personality. The world war was not a war of destiny consciously and deliberately willed by any single government or people with a definite object. Hence the unending denials of the responsibility for the outbreak of war which we have heard since it began until the present day.

These denials are probably all made in personal good faith, and certainly in the conviction that no head of a state, or responsible minister, would venture to assume the responsibility to his fellow-citizens and to humanity for such an event. The question of responsibility therefore looms disproportionately large in the case of this war. There is a considerable literature on the subject, and it has been issued, as a means of influencing public opinion, more extensively and effectively by our enemies than by ourselves. One sometimes got the impression that the public felt almost as strongly about it as about the result of the war itself. This feeling contains a real element of truth. If the whole guilt for all the horrors brought upon the world by the catastrophe of the war could be attached either to an individual or to a dominant faction, this would satisfy a vague desire for justice and retribution.

But in spite of passionate mutual accusations, there is no individual or group of persons guilty of having

consciously caused the world conflagration in order to contrive an escape from political embarrassments or to clear the path towards their objective. We should be applying a wholly inadequate scale to the world-shattering convulsions which we have experienced, were we to regard as their sufficient cause the momentary occasion of events, which had been fashioned years before in the dark workshop of history, and to discover in this cause the unqualified guilt of an individual who determined the course of affairs, and but for whom all would have been otherwise.

Though political upheavals be always the result of organic developments and complications, this fact of course does nothing to lessen the task laid upon those to whom falls the direction of affairs when critical times call for decisions; for no one is called upon to play the rôle of destiny and either hastily or frivolously, through neglect or provocation, to set in motion a train of events, incalculable in their consequences. Incapacity to guide the course of events is in itself no crime, but it is a crime to indulge in the fatalism which conduces to political gambling, or to a lazy acquiescence in events taking their course.

Fate goes its way despite all efforts made to divert it, but only he who has applied all his energy and foresight to avert disaster is justified in accepting as inevitable what has occurred.

When black, threatening clouds are piling up on the political horizon, only the most sober judgment, certain of its aims, can determine whether the storm can be averted.

With the commencement of the Balkan crisis in the year 1912, the shadow of a tragic fate had fallen upon Austria-Hungary. She preserved her calm in the face of developments which very closely and dangerously affected her interests. Not only were there complica-

tions abroad, but her enemies were carrying on their subversive activities within her own frontiers—activities to which the world never, either at that time nor later, paid sufficient attention, although thereby the fuse was already laid for exploding the combustible material accumulated on all sides, when the fatal shots were fired at Sarajevo on the 28th June 1914. The provocations of our small Serbian neighbour, feeling strong in her powerful supporter, were intolerable; no less intolerable was the prospect of seeing the course of the new settlement which was to save the monarchy, interrupted by a war which even in the most favourable event could not solve our internal problems, but would only serve to accentuate them; a war which certainly no one in Austria-Hungary desired, as is proved, if by nothing else, by the fact that the Austro-Hungarian army was admittedly quite unprepared for the outbreak of war. In the course of the war, sentiments of resolution and devotion alternated with those of despondency; confidence in victory was succeeded by doubt in the possibility of obtaining a decision by arms, and by weariness.

In the end, when all attempts at coming to an understanding with the enemy had proved unsuccessful, this feeling of weariness reached the stage of utter exhaustion, both material and spiritual.

Thereupon many felt their belief shaken in the possibility of the continued existence of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. It was still maintained by those whose hopes and final endeavours were directed towards some radical scheme of internal reorganisation, such as had long been the only prospect of salvation, and had in the end won the support even of those influences which clung most tenaciously to the existing order.

Nevertheless, in its ultimate extent, the final collapse was, to many, a revelation. It cannot be measured

in the effects of conscious human endeavour and the utmost possibilities of human resistance. Even now it is scarcely possible to review the full extent of the catastrophe of the autumn of 1918. All the energies of a stunned and confused humanity are fully occupied in clearing away the debris and in carrying out the most essential reconstruction.

Those at the helm, in whose hands the steering wheel broke down in the fateful days of the tornado, have two kinds of responsibility—to their contemporaries and to history. Regarding the first, contemporary public opinion must of necessity be the only judge. It will reveal the extent to which national misfortune is felt to be the result of unalterable facts and inevitable developments, in which all have played a part, or of the mistakes and omissions of the rulers. Moreover, every people is entitled to pronounce a judgment upon those who have carried out their duties well or ill, in the office entrusted to them. The verdict may be just or unjust. It will be within the competence of the court.

What was new and surprising in the last war was the assumption of our enemies that they were called upon, as victors, to act both as judge and plaintiff towards the conquered defendant after victory, and to punish him. To punish him because the war occurred ; and to punish him for all the criminal actions alleged to have been committed during the war. There was no question of punishing the misdeeds committed by the other side. Moreover, our enemies had no time to take into consideration facts such as that we could not have wanted the war, since in any circumstances it was a severe affliction for us ; or that it is at any rate open to question whether the Entente, having achieved the prize of victory, and having succeeded in giving effect to the objects of her policy, really regrets that the war should

have occurred, despite all her moral indignation. Our former enemies' passion for inflicting punishment, which was after all simply a desire for revenge, found its most violent expression in the demand for the "delivery of war criminals" in the winter of 1919. Through the firmness of Germany and Holland the world was spared the spectacle of a parody of justice which would have been unique. The state of mind in which the peace treaties of Versailles, Saint-Germain, Trianon, etc., were concluded could not last, or at any rate not in the same degree amongst all the members of the "victory gang." Passion has been succeeded by the calm consideration of the enormous extent of economic problems with which all states are concerned; in the light of them the results of the war appear as a condition which has but little to do with the question of right and wrong. Those to whom it fell to be victorious are now gradually coming to see that not all of their decisions are beyond appeal, and that many of their conclusions arrived at *ab inato* are up against the impossibility of controlling the whole force of circumstances.

The impracticability of the general scheme of the peace treaties is no longer in question. The only question is whether they are to be amended through revision by the Contracting Parties, or whether they are to be left to fall to pieces through their essential contradictions and assumptions, incompatible with the nature of things.

The war is a "divine court of judgment." The result of the war is the verdict, but on the question of fate, not of guilt. The conqueror may regard the defeat of his opponent as a punishment, although perhaps it was only the latter's misfortune, and the loser merely had the ill-luck to mark the diæresis which it pleases fate to insert between the past and the future. The desire still further to chastise a fallen foe for having ventured to play his part in the cause for which he stood and

which it was not for him to abandon, may be explained by the thirst for vengeance ; it is no criterion for the just appreciation of the actions of those who, in carrying out their duty, were denied success.

The forum of world history works slowly. The inconsistent processes of contemporary opinion cannot win a verdict from it ; its verdict will only gradually emerge from the evidence of facts as they come to light, from the examination of the connection between causes and effects, and from the revelation of all the forces which urge obsolete and moribund, or young and growing interests to carry on the fight for existence.

Having twice during the war been entrusted with the conduct of the foreign affairs of Austria-Hungary, and having through my earlier official position been brought into close contact with the districts which furnished the immediate occasion of the world war, I was in a position to obtain a deeper insight into the awful chaos of conflicting interests which, grown beyond the stage of purely local treatment, had become involved in all the great world problems, and could now only come to a solution in a gigantic struggle—a solution which could not be anything more than partial.

Events were in the full stride of their fateful course. I had to judge how far the violent forces which had been set in motion allowed of my active and moderating intervention in those phases of the war which coincided with my period of office.

This book shall give an account of the extent to which I succeeded in my task.

STEPHAN GRAF BURIÁN.

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AUSTRIA IN DISSOLUTION

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CHAPTER I

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY IN JANUARY 1915

ON the 13th January 1915, when I was entrusted with the direction of the foreign policy of Austria-Hungary, the war was at the critical stage of the battles in the Carpathians. The shock of the enormous forces of the Russians was being broken by the heroic defence in the frontier mountains of Hungarian Galicia. The road to Budapest was blocked. After this failure, following upon the serious reverses in East Prussia and Poland, our enemies could no longer hope that the mighty struggle would be decided in a short time by the mass effect of the Russian armies, by the "steam roller" crushing everything in its path.

On the other hand, our enemies were already counting on their forces being increased at an early date by the accession of Italy. It is true that neither Austria-Hungary nor Germany ever counted on this ally as a fellow-combatant in a crisis. Since the experience of Algeciras and the conspiracy of Racconigi—the negotiations at the latter place can hardly be described in any other way—we could no longer feel that we had a guarantee even of friendly relations with our second ally.

But the most modest expectations based upon Italy's entrance into our alliance with Germany were doomed to disappointment at the beginning of the war. France, in the security of significant agreements with Italy which virtually neutralised our alliance, did not need to allot a single man to guard her south-eastern frontier. There was not an Italian statesman who would have dared to involve his country in hostilities with England. The fact that this Power was in the opposite camp was the determining factor in the attitude of

Italy ; on the declaration of war she had immediately stated that she did not feel that the occasion fell within the terms of the alliance, and that she would remain strictly neutral.

But how did this neutrality actually work out ? It was the curtain behind which Italy quietly completed her preparations for deserting her allies and joining the Entente. She was able to select the moment which appeared to her the most favourable for every step that she took towards the Entente Powers, who were seeking her favours, and away from her allies, who certainly had no occasion to hasten such an unsatisfactory development.

There was certainly no moment when Italy's neutrality could be regarded as benevolent. Instead of giving political and military support to our Serbian policy, Italy immediately made it the ground of a claim to compensation on the basis of Article VII of the Treaty of Alliance. When I took office she had already indicated that Austro-Hungarian territory was the only form of compensation which would be acceptable. But in the meantime we had already evacuated Serbia in December, whilst Italy had occupied Valona towards the end of the same month.

At the beginning of the winter of 1915 I found the Rumanian policy in the balance ; sentimentally she was on the side of the Entente, but was waiting to see how the fortune of war would turn in the spring.

The Polish problem had again arisen, as soon as our troops and the Germans had entered Polish territory. It was already beginning vaguely to affect our policy, since in all its developments it could not fail to have the most profound influence upon our internal and external relations.

CHAPTER II

ITALY

THE negotiations with Italy constituted my first grave anxiety when I took office.

It will be readily understood that the responsible person in charge of these negotiations, which were not destined to be brought to a successful issue, feels the need of satisfying both himself and the world in general as to whether he omitted anything which might have saved the group of Powers for which he was acting from the dangerous complication into which Italy's desertion of the Triple Alliance plunged them.

But now that the chain of events can be reviewed as a whole, and Italy is no longer the enemy, some people may question whether it is still of general interest to consider in detail the successive stages of the negotiations, the whole course of which was obviously a tactical manœuvre of Italy on a large scale, devoid of any serious intention of effecting an understanding.

I believe in the importance of revealing the stages leading up to an event so serious as Italy's change of front at the moment when an alliance of thirty years was to be put to a decisive test. Austria-Hungary is no more, but the policy of Austria-Hungary stands at the bar of history. This policy may have been responsible for many errors, but it was, until yesterday, the policy of peoples who to-day form new states which, however, cannot get rid of their historical connection with their past. They therefore cannot be indifferent to events which were a determining factor in the convulsions of their transition from a political association of centuries to the separate life upon which they are now entering.

From the beginning Italy's attitude to her allies was marked by cool and, as events proved, unerring calculation. Though Germany and Austria had good

reasons for seeking the alliance with Italy, their aims were chiefly of a negative nature. Italy was to be on our side in order that she should not be against us. In her anger with France over Tunis she had sought the alliance with Germany. The alliance with Austria-Hungary was the logical corollary and was very welcome to that Power, since it seemed to be the best means of smoothing over the difficulties connected with Irredentism.

Alliances must be based upon mutual interests, which must not be allowed to wane. Otherwise they are worthless. Only a lively sense of their community of interest can secure and maintain the confidence and goodwill of the members, as well as their sense of obligation. Italy valued the great advantages which she derived from standing in with the two old Powers, to whom England too had been politically attracted for a long time ;| for Italy, with her long coastline, had always tended to fall in with the policy of England. | Italy was thus in a strong position, and the development of her policy was not regarded with any special severity by her allies, even when it did not quite follow the general lines laid down by the alliance.

Although the alliance with Italy was not of vital moment to any of the Powers concerned, there was the essential difference that Germany and Austria-Hungary wished to maintain it indefinitely, whereas Italy's interest in it flagged as soon as she felt herself sufficiently strong to look out for other combinations, which must, sooner or later, involve growing opposition to her allies ; her relations with Germany would grow worse as her relations with France improved. Tunis had been irrevocably lost and was almost forgotten. France's efforts to thrust herself between Germany and Italy were unceasing. In the year 1898 a settlement of the difficult economic relations between the two neighbouring

Latin countries was effected, to their mutual satisfaction.

Every new development of British policy has a direct effect upon Italy. To such an extent is she dependent on her relations to the British Empire. In proportion as Britain's opposition to Germany increased with that country's rise to power, Italy's enthusiasm for the alliance with Germany waned; and the same applied, of course, to the alliance with Austria-Hungary, her relations with that Power being constantly embittered by the Irredentist question.

In her heart Italy had never renounced the "unredeemed" provinces. The large aims of her current policy allowed her to do so, and even made it incumbent on her to defer any dangerous problems likely to disturb the alliance, and to seek a solution along conventional lines of any difficulties which might arise out of them.

This is not the place to give even a short account of the history of the Italian alliance. It was twice renewed, in the years 1902 and 1912. Whilst the extension in 1902 was not effected entirely without a hitch, as was quite obvious from the statements of the governments both of Germany and Italy upon its conclusion, the 1912 extension inaugurated what was destined to be the final phase, in which Italy, although the atmosphere was more generally friendly, had already quite plainly blossomed forth as our rival in the whole Balkan area.

With her Tripoli campaign Italy started the first strong offensive in her Near Eastern policy. For years France and England had indicated that Tripoli was a suitable object for Italy's desire for expansion; Russia had also encouraged her in the undertaking, in return for her promised support in the Straits problem; and in spite of many political misgivings, Germany and Austria-Hungary did not place any obstacle in the path of Italy's ambition. In the course of the Tripoli campaign Italy

had several sharp passages with France and England. We had in a friendly way to use our influence to prevent the inflammable material on the Balkan Peninsula from being set alight. On the whole Italy was satisfied with her allies, and at the end of 1912 gladly renewed the alliance, which was not due to expire before 1920.

Article VII was reincorporated in the new alliance ; and it was to serve as the Archimedean point for giving effect to Italy's national and Balkan policy in the world war. This article fully achieved what the Marquis di Rudini had already claimed for her as early as 1902, "that no change should take place in any part of the Balkans without the knowledge of Italy, and to her disadvantage," and it laid down a principle of compensation, according to which any of the Contracting Powers should be entitled to receive compensation, determined beforehand, for any modification of the *status quo* in the Balkan Peninsula to the advantage of any one of them.

What was capable of being read into Article VII was to be a revelation to us.

Italian ambitions in the Balkans had been simmering for a long time. They arose naturally from her desire to be the dominant power on the Adriatic, which led her to cast longing eyes at the eastern shore of that sea ; they fastened more particularly upon Albania, the ancient starting-point of the Roman roads to the east. Italy soon interposed herself as a third party in the conflict between Austro-Hungarian and Russian interests in the Balkans.

It was not that she sided with the one against the other ; but she took advantage of any situations that arose, carefully observing the letter and the form of the alliance. So matters went on, from the well-known "special tour " up to the Czar's visit to Racconigi in the autumn of 1909, when feeling in Italian court circles

was certainly not very different from the feeling in Russia, when Bosnia-Herzegovina was merged in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy.

Although the agreements of Racconigi have not been fully revealed even by the Bolshevik revelations of 1917, it is nevertheless clear that Italian ambitions on the Balkan Peninsula could be acceptable to Russia only because they were directed against our interests. The barometer in Belgrade made this abundantly clear.

There followed the Balkan alliance and the Balkan wars. These hastened the development of the Albanian problem. But Europe still existed ; Serbia's ambitions towards the Adriatic were checked ; and an autonomous Albania was set up under the auspices of the Powers. The Triple Alliance had played a decisive part in achieving this result, and in the joint work for similar though competing interests, Austria-Hungary and Italy again approached closer to one another. But this was not to last. Although it was possible to set up a prince at Durazzo, conditions in the country did not become settled.

Even after the treaty of Bucharest, Europe did not throw off a sense of oppression.

Serbia, which the Balkan wars had hardened and sharpened as a weapon of Russian policy, grew more and more insolent, since she felt that she had a strong protector. Russia felt that her interests had suffered injury during the course of the last ten years through the Sanjak railway project, the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Ukrainophile policy of the Austrian government, and Germany's dominating influence in Constantinople. She was the less inclined to moderation since, thanks to French capital, her military preparations were rapidly approaching completion ; and the uncertainty caused by the revolutionary element at home provided a strong inducement to her governing classes to let the threatening storm discharge itself in

an external crisis, the fortunate issue of which could alone save the existing régime in Russia.

The Greater Serbia agitation had become emboldened and had entered upon the stage of "propaganda by deed." It was the sheet-lightning presaging the disaster which was to come.

The crime of the 28th June 1914 was one of a series of assaults upon dignitaries in the Southern Slav provinces; it was the occasion of the world conflagration. To describe it as the cause would be entirely to fail to understand the vast extent of the ramifications of the causes leading up to the greatest event in the history of the world. The fuel for the general conflagration had already been everywhere assembled in abundance when the spark fell which set it alight.

The world war which now began did not without further ado range every Power which took part in it on the side on which we find them at its conclusion.

Obligations arising out of alliances were reviewed, and Italy immediately found that there was no *casus fœderis*, since Austria-Hungary had not previously informed Italy of her intentions, and, moreover, the alliance was a defensive one, so that Italy was not called upon to render active assistance, since Austria-Hungary and Germany had not been attacked, but had themselves been the aggressors.

Although for a number of years, in spite of her correct attitude externally and her conventional assertions of friendly feelings, we had observed Italy becoming more and more inclined to use her influence in directions likely to be prejudicial to the aims of Austria-Hungary, and to further her own interests, this change of front, after she had found a secure refuge in the Triple Alliance over a long course of years, could not fail to cause bitter feeling in Germany and Austria.

Nevertheless, putting as good a face on things as we could, we were forced to reconcile ourselves to Italy's declaration of neutrality, which was made on the 3rd August 1914.

Even sooner, however, Italy had discovered in Article VII of the Treaty of Alliance a means of blackmail against ourselves, which was soon to convert her scarcely benevolent neutrality, first into latent, and later into open hostility.

Article VII, which was incorporated in the treaty on the first occasion of the renewal of the alliance with Italy, lays down that if, in disregard of the desire of the two contracting Powers to maintain the *status quo* in the Balkan Peninsula, one of them finds itself under the necessity of undertaking a lasting or temporary occupation of Balkan territory, the other one shall be entitled to compensation to be agreed upon beforehand. This provision was selected by Italy as the lever for her increasingly aggressive demands upon her ally. It was only a matter of proving her interpretation of the article in question, according to which the mere entry upon Serbian territory in the course of the operations of the war constituted a "temporary occupation," and the compensation which it entailed need not, as had always been understood, be limited to territory in the Balkans.

The formal notification of Italy's claims under Article VII was actually made even before the outbreak of war, and before the declaration of neutrality. On the 25th July 1914 the Italian ambassador stated to Count Berchtold, on the instructions of his government, that if the conflict should lead to hostilities, and entail an even temporary occupation of Serbian territory, Italy reserved the right of claiming compensation under Article VII of the Treaty of Triple Alliance.

It is worthy of note that on this occasion the Italian

government still assured us of a friendly attitude, and one that was consonant with the duties of the alliance.

[Italy now proceeded to make the necessary *démarches* in Vienna and Berlin to secure an interpretation of the much-discussed Article VII that would be in accordance with her ambitions. She was successful. In spite of the view which we had hitherto firmly held, the German government first, and later with great reluctance the Austrian government too, conceded that Italy was entitled to compensation for any occupation of territory in the Balkan States, even if it was merely in the course of military operation that our troops set foot on Balkan territory. This was naturally subject to the reservation on our side that Italy should faithfully carry out her obligations under the alliance.

At the instigation of Germany this reservation was finally allowed to drop, so that the Italian interpretation of Article VII was secured even in the event of her neutrality, which had been declared in the meantime.

As far as we were concerned, the early months of the war were spent by Italy in constantly pressing forward the compensation question.

Moreover, it took more and more concrete form ; and not content with seriously compromising our freedom of action in the Serbian campaign by raising the question of compensation, our southern ally took advantage of the difficult position of Austria-Hungary to bring up the Albanian question. From October 1914, without regard to the existing agreement between Austria-Hungary and Italy, or to the decisions of London, preparations were made for the occupation of Valona, and the occupation was actually effected in December.

In Vienna and Berlin we did our best to remain friendly in trying circumstances. But whilst the other great Powers were already involved in the war, Italy, in her noncommittal position, had retained full freedom of

action and was able to use the fact that her support was being canvassed for by all the others, in order to embark upon the realisation of her highest political aims. Instead of assisting her allies, she had blocked the development of the Austro-Hungarian campaign in Serbia, and was extorting compensation in advance for any real or imaginary advantage which we might achieve in the future. At the same time she had taken possession of Valona, which opened the gateway to her aims of expansion and was protected only by a conference decision of the Powers.

It only remained for her to turn her attention to the "unredeemed" provinces. It was not long before this occurred.

The subject was introduced tentatively. It was clearly Italy's aim that her policy should be understood before she would condescend to come into the open.

Whilst actively prosecuting the negotiations regarding the nature of the compensation which, in accordance with the obvious meaning of Article VII, was to be found in the Near East, Italy showed a curious reserve, modified only by hints.

The first unequivocal suggestion that "the basis in Baron Sonnino's mind" for the coming negotiations had reference to Italian national aspirations, is to be found in a conversation between the Italian ambassador and Count Berchtold on 12th December 1914 (Red Book, p. 74). The question was raised in Berlin simultaneously (Red Book, p. 77). On 6th January 1915 Baron Sonnino referred expressly to the matter in a conversation with the ambassador Freiherr von Macchio (Red Book, p. 90); without actually mentioning the word "Trentino" he indicated that there was only one direction in which Italy's territorial aspirations could be satisfied.

Finally, on the 12th January Italy openly proposed the discussion of the question of compensation on

the basis of the possible cession of Austro-Hungarian territory.

On the 14th January I took over the direction of Foreign Affairs, and was at once confronted with issues of the gravest importance in the negotiations with Italy.

The problem was to keep Italy, for whose active assistance we could no longer hope, neutral, and to try to prevent her from joining the enemy. This was of vital importance at a time when we were straining all our resources in resisting the overwhelming pressure of the enemy. There was no question of Austria-Hungary merely having to arrive at the *accord préalable* in the compensation question, in order to get a free hand in the conduct of the war. It had become obvious that Italy was determined to make use of the world war in order to achieve, as far as she possibly could, her Irredentic, Adriatic, and Near Eastern ambitions through a general diplomatic offensive on a large scale. It must be admitted she made the best possible use of the situation.

From the moment when Italy openly stated her claim to the Italian district of Austria, Austro-Hungarian foreign policy was placed in an exceedingly difficult position, for she had the choice only between two great evils: either the refusal of such a monstrous claim by an "ally," who would then no doubt have immediately become an enemy, or the acceptance of it, with the certainty of having thereby thrown away precious ballast with the risk of gaining nothing by the sacrifice, and of creating a dangerous precedent.

Fortunately it was not necessary immediately to take a decision. Indeed it seemed better to wait until Italy's tactics became clearer. She was only just at the beginning of her game, had not yet shown her hand, and, above all, was not yet prepared for the final move.

Moreover, regard for our German ally, who was

naturally as closely concerned with Italy's procedure as was Austria-Hungary, demanded calm reflection and patience.

Up to this point Baron Sonnino had avoided indicating more precisely the territory which Italy desired. German political circles were getting accustomed to speaking of the Trentino. At any rate, the opinion and the hope were gaining ground that it would be possible to secure the lasting neutrality of Italy at the price of the Italian Tirol. I could not for one moment concur in this point of view.

This belief was no doubt based upon the activities of Prince Bülow, who was then German ambassador at Rome and who was endeavouring to eliminate the Italian danger through speedily effecting a deal in territory, and was using every endeavour to find concrete proposals that might be acceptable to both sides. Even then the wishes of Italy would not have been satisfied by such a proposal, as has since been made clear in the Italian Green Book (p. 11). On the 15th January Sonnino communicated to the ambassador, Duke Avarna, a conversation which he had had with Prince Bülow on this subject, and added: "Prince Bülow speaks as though it were taken for granted that if Austria offered us the Trentino in return for our promise of absolute neutrality, we should ask for nothing more."

Three days later Sonnino explained to Prince Bülow that in "the formula dealing with the Irredentist problem Trient and Trieste must be fully dealt with"—an extension of the Italian claim from which Prince Bülow did not cease to endeavour to dissuade him. The extent to which these claims were developing was made still clearer in a conversation between Baron Sonnino and the German ambassador on the 1st February 1915 (Green Book, p. 17), in which he stated that "so long as Austria-Hungary did not accept the cession of territory

as the basis of negotiation he would refuse to make concrete suggestions or to exclude *either the Trentino, Trieste, Istria, or anything else*. 'Any further delay could only result in increased demands.' Herein we already had a suggestion of the great diplomatic offensive which Italy was to launch.

Nevertheless Germany hoped for success from a deal at the expense of the Trentino. On the 16th January, two days after I took office, a mission from the German Headquarters came to Vienna, the members of which were Prince Wedel, who had made such an impression here as ambassador, and Count Podewils, who had also spent a long time in Vienna as Bavarian ambassador. They were instructed to submit for the most serious consideration of the imperial government, and especially of myself as the new minister, that, through a tiny sacrifice on our part, Italy might be constrained to maintain real neutrality against the inducements held out by our enemies.

It was an unfortunate circumstance for me that on the first occasion on which I came into contact with the German High Command, an essential difference of opinion regarding the method of dealing with so important and burning a question should manifest itself.

Deeply convinced as I was of the necessity of securing as close an agreement with Germany in the conduct of the foreign policy of the war as in the conduct of military operations, and though I was as concerned as Germany about the equivocal attitude of Italy, still nominally our ally, who might quite conceivably not stop short of going over to our enemies, yet I did not think it right or justified by the circumstances to fall in with the German suggestion, because I could not see any advantage to be derived from it, and it had obvious perils.

The Italian problem involved the question whether, in the war, we were to be three Great Powers against

three, or four against two. Mistakes in dealing with this problem might therefore have the most serious consequences, in so far as the course of events was not already substantially laid down by the premises.

I wish neither to embark on a criticism of Austria's policy towards her Italian subjects, nor to make unprofitable reflections upon Irredentism and Italy's final desertion of the alliance.

When the treaty was broken in May 1915, indignation flamed up in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. To-day Italy is no longer the enemy. Fate has been fulfilled. We must see the new facts in their proper perspective. With the enormous gains which she has acquired, Italy is no longer faced with her original enemy as the loser, but with a German Austria, sadly afflicted through the loss of German South Tirol, and with the Southern Slav state on the Adriatic.

I could never entertain a serious doubt regarding Italy's probable attitude in the war.

The aims and ambitions of the new kingdom from the year 1866 were notorious. She scarcely troubled to conceal them by observing that minimum of reserve which was called for in a new member of the European family of states. With great circumspection she selected her position amongst the Great Powers, whose strength she always gauged correctly. It therefore followed naturally, though it appeared surprising, that in the development of her policy Italy should finally find herself in the same camp as Austria-Hungary, the Power with whose vital interests the whole extent of Italy's claims clashed at every point.

1 In joining the alliance, Italy did not offer any sacrifice or renounce any of her claims.

Neither of course did we. Even if Austria-Hungary did not achieve her object of establishing a basis of confidence and solidarity with Italy, correct relations

were created and she was restrained from openly and actively pursuing a hostile policy.

The Italian governments, which occasionally contained men who were well disposed towards Austria-Hungary, kept the machinery of the alliance well oiled, dealt with unpleasant incidents according to the approved method, and skilfully derived every advantage that they could from the alliance. "Italian public opinion" as expressed in parliament and the press, did anything further that was necessary to prevent Italian aspirations from cooling, and indeed they were apt to be particularly vocal when at difficult moments the government could not satisfy them by disclosing its arguments.

This is a short summary of the main features of our alliance with Italy, if one discards extravagant protestations of loyalty on the one side, and the modest but sincere expectations which we attached to them.

I do not wish this criticism to contain any suggestion of harshness or of moral indignation.

Each of the allies was entitled to regard the arrangement from the point of view of its utility to himself. Both Germany and Austria could easily see, if they chose, that it was Italy's disappointment in Tunis which had brought her into the alliance with us, in which thirty years later she achieved the triumph of acquiring Tripoli. The conference of ambassadors in London was the last occasion on which we were united in a common policy regarding Albania.

Albania might be created by Europe; she could not be secured against the rivalry of her two protectors. Italy's machinations did not permit the maintenance of stability, while they revealed a growing lack of regard for our interests. Our ally no longer rated us very highly, and thought that we were already showing signs of needing medical treatment. This was quite obvious

from the tone of the Italian press from the time of the Balkan wars. But even official circles in Italy encouraged this attitude. At the end of the year 1914 Prince Bülow reported to his government (Red Book, p. 88) that Giolitti and Sonnino had not disguised from him in the course of conversation "that the view prevailed in Italy that owing to her internal condition Austria could not conduct a war, and that she was doomed to go under."

Other observations by Italian statesmen were equally significant :

" . . . the excitement of public opinion in Italy . . . "

" The necessity that the dynasty should acquire an increase of territory through the world war . . . "

" The consequent necessity for warlike preparations. "

" Many people may regard the Trentino as inadequate compensation, since the aspirations of large sections are directed to Trieste. "

" Large circles desire the maintenance of peace and neutrality ; the war-mongers, though in the minority, are all the more vocal, and it is well known that in Italy those who do the shouting generally get the upper hand. "

That, in a nutshell, was the whole scheme of the campaign as we were to see it put into operation by Italy during the next few months.

When, therefore, Prince Wedel and Count Podewils came to see me on the 16th January, I expressed my conviction that it would be a great mistake to offer Italy the Trentino as the price for remaining neutral.

I believed then, as I believe now, that it would have been entirely useless to make the sacrifice. My attitude was not determined by my misgivings on the question of principle, although the voluntary surrender of the territory of one of the nationalities in such an agglomeration of peoples as Austria-Hungary might have serious

consequences. But it was of such vital importance just then not to increase the number of our enemies by the addition of another Great Power, that to secure this object it would not have been right to exclude the consideration of any sacrifice, however painful.

But there was never for a moment any ground for hoping that our object could be achieved in this way. Italy had begun her diplomatic offensive against us on the day on which we handed our ultimatum to Serbia. Had she then already made up her mind to follow it up with hostilities, if necessary? This need not be assumed without question, since Italy, like the rest of the world, wished first to see how the terrible struggle would develop.

It is useless to hazard conjectures as to what Italy's attitude would have been if Austria-Hungary and Germany had overpowered their enemies in a swift offensive.

When our military position became difficult in the autumn and winter of 1914, Italian policy entered upon a more active phase. She was driven forward, not only by her own extensive ambitions, for the satisfaction of which a path now seemed to be open, but also by the pressure of England, who, with her sea-power, seemed to hold the Apennine kingdom in a vice.

While monotonously repeating Sonnino's stereotyped phrase about "consolidating the alliance between Austria-Hungary and Italy in order to eliminate any elements of friction and to assure co-operation for mutual aims in a common policy," Italy at the same time applied the screw as occasion offered. She aimed at getting as much as possible out of Austria-Hungary by negotiation in order to secure a reliable basis for the further development of her policy, or else to have an excuse for adopting a brusque tone or even declaring an open breach if we showed signs too soon of hardening our opposition. In the meantime she kept on arming.

Up to this time Italy had consistently refused clearly

to indicate the compensation she was claiming under Article VII. Her tactics were to invite offers which she could refuse. Suggestions as to the possibility of indemnifying herself in Albania were contemptuously turned down—but Valona was seized.

Had we offered Italy the Trentino in January 1915 it was most probable—I regard it as certain—that the offer would not have been considered adequate and that it would not have secured Italy's neutrality throughout the war. But Austria-Hungary would immediately have virtually lost it, since if the surrender of this politically unstable territory had once been openly mooted, it could no longer have been retained. But if Italy had accepted the offer, she would have made the immediate cession of the territory an essential condition. The military importance of such an action need not be explained after the Isonzo battles.

I am not assuming that Italy had any treacherous intention of securing the Trentino by false promises and then exerting greater pressure to obtain new concessions; but the further development of the war, a great national movement, or incidents of various kinds, might have forced Italy to complete the "work of liberation," regardless of any obligations which bound her to us, and we should then have surrendered in advance the strongest protection of our frontier.

For these reasons I could not adopt the suggestion of Wedel's mission, which might be regarded as expressing Prince Bülow's attempts at finding a basis for mediation. That Germany should have pressed for this solution at the time and for some time afterwards is readily intelligible in view of the expectations which she attached to it. It was up to Austria-Hungary to make her position in the matter clear and to explain it to her ally—a method often successfully adopted in our relations with Germany during the war, when differences of opinion arose.

A further opportunity for doing so was offered on the occasion of my visit to the German General Headquarters at Mészières-Charleville, which I visited on the 23rd January in order to present myself to the Emperor William as the newly appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs.

At the German Headquarters the next developments were confidently, though anxiously awaited. Von Bethmann-Hollweg, the Chancellor, as well as the Secretary of State, von Jagow, were present, so that an opportunity was afforded of discussing the whole range of the problems in which Austria-Hungary and Germany were involved, now that the world war had fully developed. Germany was making good progress in the west. In the east the most terrific efforts were being made to check the gigantic onslaught of the Russians. The Italian question was the central point both of political and military interest, since upon its solution depended the question whether the great military operations which our High Commands had in view could be carried through without disturbance, and according to plan.

Exhaustive conversations with the indefatigable Chancellor and the acute Secretary of State, as well as with the plausible Chief of General Staff, von Falkenheim, gave me the opportunity of meeting their constantly reiterated suggestion that Italian neutrality should be secured by territorial concessions, with the arguments already used in Vienna. I said that I too clearly recognised the importance of sparing no effort to keep Italy out of the war, and agreed that it was worth paying a high price to secure this object, but that, in my opinion, there was no guarantee that it could be secured through the surrender of the Trentino.

At that time we failed to convince each other.

The Emperor William, while showing the deepest concern regarding the question, was keenly sensitive

to the thorny nature of the problem involved, and did not take part in the discussion.

Scarcely a month and a half later I found myself under the painful necessity of discussing the cession of Austro-Hungarian territory to Italy. But what in January would have been a mistake was in March inevitably required by a position which admitted of no delay.

My visit to the German G.H.Q. afforded me the welcome opportunity of my first personal contact with the Chancellor von Bethmann-Hollweg, with whom I was to co-operate for two years in the conservation of our joint political interests in the world war. Such co-operation is put to the test, not in unclouded days when everything is accepted as a matter of course between allies and sympathy of views finds its corollary in sympathy of action, but in those moments when the interests of the two sides do not coincide, and conflicting views emerge; when the unessential must be subordinated to that which is essential. At such difficult moments—and they must occur in any alliance—when, in working for the common object, the individual interests of the parties cannot be ignored and their patience may be severely tested, I was certain of finding in Bethmann-Hollweg a sincere striving towards objectivity, and a thoroughly cordial desire to make the alliance work harmoniously.

The Austro-Hungarian monarchy no longer exists, but the whole of which it consisted still survives in its parts, the Succession States. The history of the monarchy in the war is and will remain theirs too. Peoples and states live out their history; they do not create it. At any rate they determine their fate, not at times of great crisis, but in the gradual development over long periods of their inherent qualities. If the lines of development of various states run counter to one another and oppositions arise, it is very seldom that the choice lies between

an absolutely good alternative and one that is absolutely bad. In the case of a difference which has grown to be a conflict, it is possible for both sides to be subjectively in the right. No state or people can be asked to sacrifice itself. What is good to-day may perhaps be the lost cause of to-morrow, and not every existing order of things possesses the essential adaptability for internal reform. Even if, in a state of various nationalities such as Austria-Hungary was, the necessity of such reform is recognised, the instinct is often lacking at home for selecting the right moment, and for gauging the extent of the concessions which altered circumstances require. If internal problems are involved with external, it becomes quite impossible for anybody to maintain a completely objective attitude. The course of history will intervene, and she will execute her judgment. Self-preservation is the duty of each section that believes in its right to throw into the scales all its resources of strength and foresight in order to effect as many successes as possible in the struggle.

Such was the nature of our task too when Italy, long before her military attack, launched her diplomatic offensive.

Ever since it had become certain that Italy would never fight at the side of her former allies, and it could only be a question of securing her neutrality for the war, it was of vital importance for us to gain as much time as possible, to exhaust every argument and possibility in patient negotiation, and to show a readiness to meet her in any way that could induce her to refrain from attacking us, and in the meantime to make all possible preparations so that we should not be unready at the moment when Italy should join our enemies.

The Treaty of Alliance was still formally maintained. But while Austria-Hungary was content to argue from Article III, which provides for the neutrality of any ally

who does not join in, Italy clung all the more to Article VII, into which, having regard to the very difficult position of her ally, she managed to read anything that the subtleties of interpretation could possibly suggest.

When Italy had secured the assent of Germany and Austria-Hungary to her interpretation of Article VII, she startled her unfortunate allies with the proposition that the mere entry upon Serbian territory in the course of military operations amounted to provisional occupation within the meaning of Article VII, and that compensation should be made accordingly on the basis of an *accord préalable*—the only form of compensation which she would consider being Austro-Hungarian territory. The two claims taken together amounted to prohibiting us from continuing to carry on the war against Serbia unless we previously satisfied Italy with Austro-Hungarian territory.

It was now a question of keeping calm and surveying the whole situation.

On the 17th January the Italian ambassador paid me his first call in order to continue the conversations regarding the compensation question which he had begun with my predecessor in office, Count Berchtold.

The Duke Avarna was an old personal friend, and we shared the memories of colleagues in the service, from the days when we had been ambassadors of our respective countries at Athens. I knew him to be a conscientious, capable diplomat. In Vienna, where he had been ambassador for ten years, he was esteemed as the reliable guardian of friendly relations between his country and Austria-Hungary. Although a warm patriot, he was associated with those Italian politicians who believed that the interests of their country would, even in the future, be better protected in the old alliance than in a new association. Moreover, the change of

front in view of the enemy went against the grain as a man of honour.

At the start the Duke Avarna did not readily fall in with the rôle of exponent of Sonnino's policy, but he carried it out with the greatest precision, and I could not but regard myself as fortunate in having him as my fellow-negotiator, since I always found him anxious to smooth out the constantly growing points of difference, and to restrain the impetuosity of his government.

The unofficial and friendly tone in which our conversations were generally conducted permitted a closer examination of our points of view, so that we were soon, in a manner of speaking, allies.

Neither the ambassador nor I saw much prospect in the negotiations. He was even definitely pessimistic. But we were agreed that we must seize even the smallest opportunity and clutch at any straw in order to avoid a breach or, if the worst came to the worst, to delay it as long as possible. We did not wish to be blamed for what was inevitable.

The Duke Avarna, whilst conscientiously carrying out his duty, had maintained a certain degree of independence in his political relations with his government, inasmuch as it was well known in Rome that, having been for ten years ambassador in Vienna and notoriously a supporter of the Triple Alliance, he would not countenance any policy hostile to the alliance; and if the Italian government were dissatisfied they could recall him. The fact that he was left at his post showed that Rome desired and hoped to maintain the alliance, or at any rate wished that Vienna should think so.

With me personally the Duke Avarna did not long pretend that Italy was not making the most active preparations for war against us. When he visited Rome in August and December 1914, he had clearly seen this and had warned us in Vienna. He gave us to under-

stand that at Rome they were determined to get everything possible for Italy out of the war, and as it was inconceivable that Austria-Hungary would, of her own accord, concede all that would be demanded, the conclusion was obvious.

Such were the auspices under which I took up the thread of the negotiations.

They enabled us to force Italy, whose policy obviously was to cause a breach with Austria, to reveal her plans by agreeing to her pretensions step by step. They should prove clearly to the outside world whether Italy was negotiating merely in order to arrive at a certain fixed date, or whether she would hold her hand at a stage where peace and friendship were still conceivable. The negotiations might last for some time, since Italy was unprepared both for attack and for defence. There was no fear of their being dragged out indefinitely; the date when Italy's preparations would be completed was more or less ascertained. By that time the attempts at reaching an understanding would either have been successful or they would have proved that their failure was not due to Austria-Hungary.

I was firmly determined to conduct the negotiations in a spirit of absolute sincerity and frankness, to defend our interests and our rights, but not to shrink from the prospect of greater sacrifices if they were justified by circumstances and calculated to bring advantage to my country or to preserve her from greater ills. The changing position on the fronts made it impossible to define a settled programme. But the scope of the negotiations had to be limited by the vital interests of Austria-Hungary. The course of the negotiations soon showed that the screw would be applied indefinitely.

Each increase in the Italian demands was introduced with the preamble we have already mentioned, and which

had now hardened into a stereotyped formula : “ *De créer une bonne foi entière entre les deux puissances, d'éliminer des frictions continuelles entre elles vers des buts de politique générale. Toute amitié, qui n'est pas basée sur l'amitié et ne contribue pas à augmenter l'amitié même, ne peut réussir et reste condamnée à demeurer stérile et inutile.*”

The extortionate demands of Italy were to be put forward for as long as possible under the cloak of friendship and alliance. Meanwhile her demands increased proportionately with our difficulties in the eastern theatre of war, and with the progress of her own military preparations. It was about the end of April when the climax of her demands came, coinciding with the completion of her military preparations.

Up to that time there was no actual danger, but Austria-Hungary had to ascertain definitely what Italy's intentions were, and go as far as possible to meet her in order that Italy should not be driven into the camp of our enemies through our fault, if she had not already made up her mind to side against us.

This was what determined my attitude during the negotiations which were carried on until relations were broken off. They did not achieve their object, but they revealed that it was impossible of achievement.

The diplomatic documents regarding the relations between Austria-Hungary and Italy from 20th July 1914 to 23rd May 1915 published in the Austro-Hungarian Red Book of the year 1915, exhaustively reveal this long struggle for a compromise. I must here limit myself to an outline of its principal features.

When the Italian ambassador, on the occasion of his call on me on the 17th January, in accordance with his instructions openly mentioned his government's proposal for a cession of territory under Article VII of the Treaty of Alliance, he coupled it with the assurance

of the dominating desire in Italy to maintain a conservative policy and to preserve the alliance with us, "*mais avec la superposition de quelque satisfaction des aspirations nationales.*" It is worth while to note this modest attitude and to contrast it with the increasing scale of the future demands.

I was not lacking in warm assurances of our sincere desire to fall in with any acceptable conditions for maintaining and consolidating our close relations with Italy; only at the same time I had to express my doubt whether Italy was following the right path to attain this object. I submitted that even if Baron Sonnino introduced the suggestion for surrendering Austro-Hungarian territory with the advice "*qu'il faut avoir le courage et le calme d'aborder à l'occasion la discussion au sujet de cette question délicate,*" the Italian minister's suggestion was somewhat startling; and that, whilst Austria-Hungary had reconciled herself to Italy's neutrality and had accepted her interpretation of Article VII, for Italy to seek compensation elsewhere than in the Balkan Peninsula, not to mention in the territory of her ally, was entirely contrary to the spirit of Article VII and to the basic idea of the Triple Alliance, which was first and foremost directed towards the maintenance of the territorial integrity of the allies.

The publication of the long-expected Italian demands placed Austria-Hungary in an exceptionally serious position. It was impossible to doubt that Italy's territorial claims would now remain permanently on the agenda. Abruptly to have rejected them would have been a mistake, for this would have led to results which we wished to avoid at any price. To accept them wholly or in part was inadmissible for the reasons already explained. We should have had to suffer all the disadvantages involved, without being able to assure the certainty of the other party carrying out their

obligations, since these would continue for the duration of the war. The further development of the question alone could show whether the sacrifice asked of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy was justified or inevitable. There was no danger in delay, since Italy's military preparations were still incomplete, and she was therefore not in a position, even if she had been politically inclined, to press her demands by any other means than those of negotiation. Italy wanted to be well on with the new love before she broke with the old.

I therefore contented myself with reciprocating the cordial expressions of the Italian government, and their desire to place our alliance on a new and wider basis, and with telling the ambassador that we too regarded an amicable continuance of the discussion as useful and necessary ; that the difference between us at the moment was that Italy had a preference for securing a portion of the territory of the monarchy, whereas we suggested that the compensation should be found elsewhere.

As early as 28th January the Italian offensive was carried a step further. The ambassador was instructed to inform me that Italy would consider only territorial concessions from Austria-Hungary's possessions and that nothing else could be discussed. Baron Sonnino's instructions described the matter as most urgent, as he must secure our consent in principle before parliament met.

There was no reason, however, why we should hurry. This too was a case of "*bis dat qui cito dat*," but in the literal sense of that proverb. Here the principle was everything, and if it were admitted, the door would be open to the widest claims in the Italian Chamber.

I therefore pointed out to the ambassador that it was difficult to follow the Italian process of reasoning, when they alleged that their right under the treaty to be indemnified in case of Austria-Hungary gaining an

advantage in the Balkans, with adequate compensation there or elsewhere, entitled them to receive definite compensation in advance for the bare possibility of future gains of ours, at the sacrifice of a part of our own dominions. But I admitted my willingness to discuss even this possibility in order to give proof of our sincere desire to arrive at a satisfactory understanding with Italy. We must, however, be permitted to examine the Italian proposal, which was a quite exceptionally difficult one for us, with the greatest care.

I suggested that in order to encourage the harmonious exchange of ideas between us, Italy should not press so impatiently for an answer.

After this sketch of the introduction of the question of concessions I will pass rapidly over the well-known phases of this nerve-racking three months of negotiations, in which the original modest *parecchio* of Giolitti very soon grew to an imperialistic programme embracing the Adriatic, to be realised almost wholly at the expense of Austria-Hungary.

A call of the Italian ambassador on the 9th February conveyed a fresh intimation of Baron Sonnino's impatience. I informed the Duke Avarna that I was getting into touch with the other parties concerned in the monarchy regarding the Italian proposal, since I alone was not authorised either to accept it or to reject it.

On this occasion I put forward our own claim under Article VII for compensation for the Italian occupation of the Dodecanese in the Tripoli war and of Valona in the previous December, suggesting that as an obvious counter-claim it could be negotiated at the same time as that of the Italians and thus everything be settled at once.

I thought this might be calculated slightly to check the extravagance of the Italian demands. My entirely unexpected proposal caused the ambassador some confusion.

The effect on Baron Sonnino was surprising. Not

having any reasonable arguments against our similar claims under Article VII, he lost his composure. He informed me that he withdrew all his proposals and relied upon the obvious intention of Article VII. He said that he would regard any Austro-Hungarian military action in the Balkans as a direct breach of this Article, unless an agreement had previously been come to under the terms of the Article. Austria-Hungary's repudiation of this obligation might lead to serious consequences for which his government declined to accept responsibility.

This was the first threat.

I told the Duke Avarna that I observed with regret that his minister seemed to be losing his patience. I said that he must realise how thorny was the path along which he was taking us in the compensation question. I should maintain my determination to come to a friendly understanding with Italy, to deal with the question thoroughly, and to examine it in conjunction with the other parties concerned. The Italian government took their stand on Article VII. I found no difficulty in following them, since we concurred in the interpretation of that condition of the treaty which had already been accepted by our Allies. The *accord préalable*, however, could, in the nature of things, only have reference to the preliminary stages of any military operations, since their results could not be measured beforehand, nor could an "adequate" compensation be arrived at. In resuming our operations against Serbia we would bear in mind all the rights and duties arising out of Article VII of the Treaty of Alliance. And in this the Duke Avarna concurred.

On the 22nd February the Duke Avarna handed me new demands from Sonnino. The agreement preliminary to any military operation must be not merely sketched out, but completed; this amounted in the present case to a form of veto on any military action

by Austria-Hungary, before the conclusion of a compensation agreement with Italy; any departure from this procedure by the Imperial government would be regarded as a flagrant breach of the treaty, and would give Italy a free hand to take any steps she thought necessary for guarding her own interests.

This was the second threat to Austria-Hungary!

It was not difficult to refute Baron Sonnino's arguments (Red Book, p. 109), but it was impossible to make him give up his fixed formulæ.

The long and short of all our wrangling up to the present had been to forbid us to continue the campaign in Serbia unless Austria-Hungary previously agreed to surrender territory to Italy.

On 26th February Baron Sonnino intervened with a suggestion to set up a kind of sliding scale of compensation in order to arrive at a correct measure of the mutual advantages to be adjusted. I most eagerly adopted this idea, which might put an end to the deadlock in our negotiations with Baron Sonnino. In any case the proposal contained the limitation "*si des circonstances spéciales le conseillaient.*"

Moreover, I reminded the ambassador that our conversation should be resumed when we began our new campaign against Serbia.

But on the 2nd March, when I claimed the existence of such *circonstances spéciales* as were indicated by his own suggestion, he held that they did not apply. The old game was starting again!

Meanwhile the critical moment for our decisions in regard to Italy was approaching.

The situation in that country was obviously developing. Even if no violent war spirit was yet in evidence, the war party were making great progress. Their slogans, in spite of any apprehensions they might arouse, ex-

pressed the sentiments and the national feelings even of those who still hoped that Italy's aims might be achieved without her entry into the war. The government relied upon the support of parliament, and no party, with the possible exception of the socialists, seriously attempted to oppose its policy. But in spite of all friendly words this policy was more and more obviously leading to war.

The desire to secure as much as possible from Austria-Hungary by way of negotiation was undoubtedly sincere. The moderate party should see how little was to be got out of Austria-Hungary by friendly means. But if we once began to surrender territory, it would be the first step on a steep path from which there was no turning back. Italy now wished to bring the negotiations, which had hitherto been conducted in secret (though everybody knew of them), into the open, and a territory which a State is prepared to surrender on conditions is half lost, even if the other party does not accept them. In any case, the Italian government's programme far exceeded anything it could have hoped to achieve in the way of negotiation, except from an Austria-Hungary in immediate danger of collapse. But to present their bill for this amount was not practicable yet. Moreover, the inducements and temptations held out by the Entente gained more and more force, supported by the overmastering fear of England, as Italy's coast was absolutely at her mercy.

The Italian government had from the first come to an unfavourable conclusion regarding the prospects of the Central Powers in the war. She was confirmed in this view at the end of 1914, and took up her position accordingly. When the first terrible winter of the war drew to an end without its reaching a decisive stage, Baron Sonnino was in a position to adapt himself to various eventualities. If the Entente were victorious,

Italy would be assured of a share in their triumphs. If the Central Powers retained the upper hand, Italy was in a position to weight the scale in favour of the Allies and to put in a claim for substantial reward.

It is difficult to ascertain the exact moment when Baron Sonnino made up his own mind to bring about a breach with Austria-Hungary.

For as long as possible I opposed the very pessimistic view of the Duke Avarna, who, after his visits to Rome in August and December 1914, already described the position in Italy as highly dangerous. After our discussions he would always ask me in private conversation whether I did not see that Sonnino had made up his mind to go to war with us ; that he was only keeping us in suspense in order to gain time, and that all these negotiations were leading nowhere. After all, we could not concede what Sonnino was demanding.

Such words may seem surprising from the lips of an ambassador whose business it was to do his best to make the demands of his government appear acceptable. This he did conscientiously, but without conviction ; he was acting quite honestly, because he was known in Rome to be a supporter of the Triple Alliance and all that it entailed. It still suited Baron Sonnino to use him as a figure-head in this way, and the Duke Avarna accepted the rôle in order to delay the conclusion which he was already convinced was inevitable. He wanted to remain true, not only to his country, but also to himself.

I constantly represented to the Duke Avarna the view which I sincerely held, that in the course of these negotiations we must honestly strive, in spite of all the difficulties, to turn to account even the smallest prospect of bringing them to a favourable conclusion. Austria-Hungary would always take Baron Sonnino at his word and, as long as he spoke of alliance, neutrality, peace, and friendship, would always gladly listen to him.

Reports from Italy painted the position from the end of February in very dark colours. General expectations had been aroused and feeling ran high. If the crisis was not to be precipitated, the negotiations must be carried on. If it came, Italy's lack of restraint should alone be to blame. Moreover, Italy was not yet prepared for war, though our public opinion was getting uneasy at the war talk, of which we heard the echoes.

The fact that Italy had stated her claim to the "unredeemed" districts was no longer a secret. The danger of our enemies being increased by the possible addition of Italy appeared so serious to our whole public opinion that we began to be reconciled to the idea of making a territorial sacrifice to avoid this calamity.

We now had to consider the requirements of the new situation. Negotiations were no longer possible upon any other basis than that of a surrender of territory.

We had to secure the agreement of all the parties concerned. The Hungarian politicians, being less directly interested in the question, raised no objection. As parliament was not sitting I could only get into touch with the party leaders in Austria. The representative men of all parties with whom I contrived to discuss the matter, either at their suggestion or at my own, and to whom I gave detailed information regarding the course of the negotiations, admitted the necessity that Austria should cede districts with an Italian population if thereby Italian neutrality could be assured. Thus I ascertained confidentially by the only means possible in the absence of parliament, through channels fairly representative of public opinion, that the reasons for the painful sacrifice were fully appreciated in Austria-Hungary. The agreement of both governments was conveyed to me on the 5th March. A Crown Council was held at Schönbrunn on the 8th March, presided over by the aged monarch, at which the heir to the throne was also

present. The Emperor again had to take one of those tragic decisions which were so frequent in the course of his reign, and it was formally resolved to authorise me to accept Sonnino's proposals in principle.

This resolution was at once formally communicated to our German ally, with the observation that we limited our concessions to Italian Tirol, and to a boundary strategically favourable to ourselves, the transfer not to be effected until the conclusion of hostilities. From Italy we demanded benevolent neutrality and a free hand for our campaign in the Balkans, in return for this compensation.

I communicated our decision to our Italian ambassador on the 9th March, adding that I had already informed Berlin, and through them, Rome, as it was a matter that concerned the Triple Alliance. The negotiations regarding the actual compensation would of course be conducted only between ourselves and Italy.

The breathing-space gained by our compliance was, as I had naturally expected, of short duration. Baron Sonnino had now got us on the ground which in his strong position he had selected. As early as the 12th March he laid down three conditions for further discussion: the strictest secrecy; the immediate application of the concessions; and the extension of the agreement to any circumstances in which Article VII might apply. On our acceptance of these points Baron Sonnino would define the irreducible minimum of his terms.

The second condition was an impossibility which we must refuse point-blank. It would have been an incredible spectacle for us to have surrendered a piece of strategically important territory to our "ally" to secure his promise not to attack us in the back. But up to the end the Italian minister maintained this demand

for the *transfert immédiat*, so characteristic of his policy of immediately creating a new difficulty when an old one had been overcome.

Nevertheless I was determined not to lose patience. Too much was at stake. I made every effort to undo the knots tied by Sonnino.

The subsequent comings and goings in our exchange of ideas were characterised on our side by an attempt to be conciliatory and on Italy's side by an attempt to gain time before finally committing herself. In the end, as Sonnino consistently refused to formulate his demands, we put forward the concrete proposal on the 27th March to surrender the Trentino to Italy in return for that country's promise of benevolent neutrality throughout the war.

On the 1st April the Duke Avarna was already in a position to inform me that Baron Sonnino considered our proposals vague and unsatisfactory. Future friendly relations between us were worth a higher price. Thus we had the first hint of those extensive demands of Italy, which if not yet formulated were already prepared; our very natural request for benevolent neutrality within the terms of Article IV of the Treaty of Alliance was carped at, and for the first time the claim to our *désintéressement* in Albania was mooted (Red Book, p. 134).

It was a coincidence that on the same date we received the first news of the secret Italian advance towards our frontier.

But in Rome, since the battle of the Marne, Hindenburg's retreat from the Warsaw-Evangorod line, and our reverse in Serbia, the military position was assumed to be developing in favour of the Entente, and they were inclined to be influenced less by our proposals than by our power of resistance and the prospects of

the Russians in Hungary and of the Entente in the Dardanelles.

On the 10th April Sonnino communicated to me his "counter-proposal," which best explained his dissatisfaction with my suggestion. His eleven points already included almost everything that Italy was later to be guaranteed by her new allies as a reward for her change of front, but Austria-Hungary, as long as she was still unconquered, could not possibly consider their discussion.

In order to demonstrate our sincere desire to arrive at an understanding with Italy, we offered further important concessions in South Tirol, though we had to refuse the Italian demands regarding the Isonzo, Trieste, and the Dalmatian Islands as being incompatible with Austria-Hungary's most vital interests.

This occurred on the 17th April. I may remark as a curious fact that, in a conversation with our ambassador at Rome on the 29th April (Red Book, p. 150), the Prime Minister Salandra remarked, with reference to South Tirol, that Italy did not wish to take over any German subjects at all, but only asked for the language boundary.

On the 22nd April Sonnino gave me to understand that he regarded my reply as unsatisfactory, and again referred to the necessity for the immediate transfer of the territories to be ceded.

In these circumstances one's scepticism as to the friendly intentions of the Italian government could not but be intensified, but it was advisable to keep up the conversations with Rome, barren though they were.

Moreover, in spite of the secrecy which was supposed to surround them, these conversations were not carried on *tête à tête*.

Germany naturally took a lively interest in their progress. She was as anxious as we were that the link

should not be broken. She would welcome any concessions that we could make. Zimmermann, the Under-Secretary of State, came to Vienna in the middle of April, and von Jagow, the Secretary of State, went to Rome at the same time to see what could be done to keep Italy from attacking us. In its immediate effects upon the general military situation, the matter affected Germany as closely as Austria-Hungary. These points of view were fully elucidated on the occasion of a visit which I paid to the German Chancellor on the 24th April in Berlin. On this occasion we also agreed that it was fortunate that we had not already surrendered the Trentino, but still had it to offer.

But the Entente too was being very active. Almost at the same time as von Jagow, the French General Pau was staying in Rome, prophesying our speedy military collapse and giving out that the Entente would recognise Italian accessions of territory only if Italy co-operated in the war. The enemy were applying every conceivable pressure to frustrate our negotiations. Sonnino's suspicions were played upon with the suggestion that Austria-Hungary, if victorious, would repudiate her concessions, whilst he was also given to understand that the Entente, if victorious, would never recognise them.

It was at this time, too, that I made the suggestion of sending a high personage on a confidential mission to Rome, in order to facilitate the negotiations by an exhaustive discussion of the whole network of our mutual interests. Sonnino, however, politely demurred to this suggestion. This was not unnatural, since he had already, on the 26th April, concluded his pact with the Entente.

This fact, which was first definitely revealed by the publications of the Russian Bolsheviks, gave a certain unreality to the last phases of our negotiations. My

chagrin did not prevent me from replying at length and in the most conciliatory manner on the 29th April to Sonnino's impossible demands of the 24th April, and to his unfriendly attitude to my most recent suggestion.

This produced on the 1st May a laconic, almost careless reply from Baron Sonnino to our ambassador at Rome (Red Book, p. 164).

Nevertheless I did not fail to show a certain desire to meet him in the Albanian question, and with regard to Trieste and the Isonzo district. I went up to the very limit of what appeared to be tolerable if the Austro-Hungarian monarchy was to continue as a whole. With regard to the *mise en effet*, too, Sonnino's special crotchet, I put forward suggestions of various and effective guarantees.

Nevertheless the Italian government proceeded unmoved upon the path that had obviously been mapped out for them. On the 4th May, quite without warning, Italy proceeded to tear up the Treaty of Triple Alliance. On the same day Baron Sonnino had had a long conversation with the ambassador, Baron Macchio, in the course of which he made no mention of the step which the Duke Avarna had just taken in Vienna.

I will here pass over the grounds given by the Italian government for a decision dictated only by a desire for a breach. I endeavoured to set it in its true light in my reply of 21st May (Red Book, pp. 170 and 200), in which I will here only mention my statements that we could not concede the justice of the accusations compiled by Baron Sonnino nor admit the declaration that the treaty was null and void.

The final sentence of my note stated that the Imperial government could not take cognisance of the Italian government's declaration that she henceforward claimed full freedom of action, and regarded her treaty with

Austria-Hungary as null and void, since this declaration was in direct conflict with the solemn duties which Italy had undertaken in the treaty of 5th December 1912, which was subject to one year's notice, and which allowed for no other method of terminating it.

I had taken my time over this reply, for the repudiation of the treaty did not amount to war, and I wished to carry out my resolution up to the very end to leave nothing untried which might give an opening to the last remnants of a section of Italian opinion which was still observable. Although I had confidential reports regarding the conclusion of the agreements between Italy and the Entente, neither I nor even the outer political circles in Italy had more definite information on the subject, especially as to dates. The Italian government had regained its freedom of action as far as one side was concerned, but did not let it be known that it was already bound to the other.

Even in this one-sided, treaty-less relationship I was at pains to keep the last weak threads of a possible friendly solution in hand. I would make still further efforts to prevent Italy from coming into the war against us.

On the 5th May I caused fresh concessions to be offered in Rome. On the receipt of this communication Baron Sonnino called attention to the fact that Italy was now an entirely free agent, but said that our proposals would be examined by the cabinet.

Not much was to be expected from such an examination. We went even further. On the 10th May, not under the stress of failure in the field, but with all the prestige of our break-through at Gorlice, we made proposals meeting Italian wishes in several essential points. We even took into account their desire for an island in the Adriatic, and offered Pelagosa.

Since we had good reason to believe that the King

and other important people concerned were kept in the dark as to our offers, and we did not wish to lose the effect of their possible influence upon circles friendly to us, we had a comprehensive summary of our proposals in eight points brought to the notice of several high political personages, through the German and Austro-Hungarian ambassadors at Rome.

In any case it was all to no purpose, as Sonnino scarcely took the trouble any longer to conceal his military aims.

He and Salandra still had opposition to overcome in the cabinet, but he hoped to get rid of this by a resignation. Since Austria-Hungary had no occasion to take upon herself the odium of breaking off negotiations, or to help the Italian government out of her embarrassments, we too prepared to resume the negotiations with any new cabinet on the same basis.

For this purpose a comprehensive draft of our complete offer was prepared (Red Book, p. 185).

Since, as was to be expected, the resignation of Salandra's cabinet was not accepted, I instructed our ambassador, Baron Macchio, to hand the draft to Baron Sonnino.

I also desired to hear any further wishes that he might have to bring forward, and to make it almost impossible for him to find a plausible pretext for breaking with us. But in the meantime the Italian government had been steadily bringing itself under the influence of the growing chorus of patriotic demonstrations which it carefully fostered and encouraged.

The decisive hour was approaching. Sonnino became more and more difficult of access to our representative. Such discussions as it was still possible to arrange remained almost monologues of our ambassador.

When the two houses of parliament met on the 20th May, the government introduced a measure giving

them extensive powers in the event of war, and associated it with a declaration which was in effect a severe indictment of Austria-Hungary, from which it only remained to draw the logical consequences. Amid violent demonstrations for war, the government was granted a vote of confidence.

On the 22nd May, in a final attempt to ward off the imminent danger of war, I offered a further concession in the question of the *mise en effet*. We had been confidentially invited to do so at the suggestion of the Pope and of a highly placed Italian personage in active politics, who were of the opinion that it might still conduce to the preservation of peace if we made this last offer in writing. Baron Sonnino, who had nothing further to conceal, replied that it was too late.

It was never too late, if peace were desired. Sonnino had decided on war, and so every attempt at meeting him was too late, as he always took two steps back for each step one took towards him. But that was the first day on which the minister actually said "too late," for the 23rd May brought Italy's declaration of war, which was based merely upon "the protection of Italian rights and interests."

The one month's Agreement of London with the Entente was nearly up. Italy's entry into the war was awaited with impatience, since the position on the eastern and western fronts had in the meantime altered very much in favour of the Central Powers. But Italy's help could only be effective in a month's time, as her preparations for the war had not been completed. Austria-Hungary too had gained time, enabling her to seek means of protection against the treacherous attack; and then she was able, in an heroic defence of her territories, to hold out against her new enemy on the south until, together with her ally, she was crushed under the overwhelming weight of superior numbers.

Objections were raised later, especially by the opposition in the Hungarian parliament, to the tactics which I pursued in the negotiations with Italy. In replying to them at the time, I made a short statement as to what the actual position was :

I. Since the beginning of the war, Italy had been determined to utilise this unique opportunity, so far as it was in any way possible, to realise all her ambitions.

II. From the first, Italy's manner of pressing her claim to compensation suggested extortion rather than concern for the fulfilment of the treaty.

III. Italy equipped her army in order to throw it into the scales.

IV. Possibly Italy had not previously made up her mind to attack us, and wished first to see how the war would develop.

V. Italy's war policy probably began to take shape after the German failure on the Marne, Hindenburg's retreat from Warsaw-Evangorod, and our evacuation of Serbia.

VI. Italy particularly wanted the Trentino, but she never stated or even indicated that this would satisfy her. In Germany there was a very general belief that it would, and many impatient attempts were made to induce Austria-Hungary to make the sacrifice.

VII. I opposed this proposal because I was convinced that the surrender of the Trentino would be premature and quite useless, that it would not satisfy Italy, and offered us no guarantee for securing our object. Nobody who had occasion to observe Sonnino during these negotiations would have got the impression that after securing a concession suggested by Germany in January, he would quietly have watched the further development of events.

There was nothing in our subsequent experience to alter these conclusions.

These negotiations came in for posthumous criticism from the delegate Dr. Stransky, in the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Austrian Delegation on the 24th January 1918. There were three main grounds of complaint : that I had interfered in the affairs of other states ; had suffered the interference by other states in our affairs ; and in the course of the negotiations had also compromised our sovereign rights.

As I attended these meetings in my capacity as joint finance minister, I met these criticisms adequately, as I believe, in the explanation that I made on the 25th January, in which I gave quite a short summary of the principal features of the negotiations.

My reply contains one or two features which will serve to complete the sketch of the negotiations given above. I have therefore included it by way of appendix, and will now only refer to that portion of my reply which deals with the special point raised by Dr. Stransky, regarding the German guarantee for the execution of our concessions to Italy—a guarantee which we offered to Baron Sonnino at his suggestion, when his suspicions caused him to insist upon the immediate *mise en effet* of our concessions. The German guarantee was a red rag to the Czech Dr. Stransky. He regarded it both as an encroachment of Germany and as a surrender of our sovereign rights. To this I replied : “ Sonnino was not satisfied with any security for our concessions that we could devise, and amongst other things he demanded Germany’s guarantee. Having regard to our relations with Germany, her guarantee cannot possibly be described as the ‘intervention of a foreign state.’ Germany never for a moment offered us her guarantee, much less pressed it upon us. When the idea of the guarantee arose between Italy and ourselves, we naturally sounded Berlin, and found them most ready to fall in with the idea if it could in any way

conduce to the success of the negotiations. I hold that when we had once made up our minds to such a painful sacrifice, it would have been a mistake to allow a mere question of form to spoil everything. I therefore actually had no misgivings about asking for this German guarantee if necessary. As the negotiations were so soon broken off, it never had to be given."

The outbreak of war between ourselves and Italy affected Germany as closely as ourselves, even though Italy had not declared war on her. We and our ally had a common front, and it amounted to the same thing whether German troops fought against Italy with us, or whether she had to make good on the northern front the troops which we had to withdraw for our southwestern frontier. Nevertheless the question of Germany's future attitude to Italy was the subject of very careful consideration and also of some difference of opinion.

If by an immediate breach with Italy Germany proclaimed her opinion of Italy's attack upon her ally, and sent her troops to assist in the defence of our southern frontier, we should have presented to the world a picture of absolute harmony with Germany. But there were other points of view too. Germany, after all, was protecting our territory also, on all the fronts on which she was fighting. Italy had no occasion to declare war on Germany and thereby invite her direct attack. Germany saw certain advantages in maintaining her own connection with Italy as long as possible, and thereby introducing a discordant element into the harmonious picture of the unity of the Entente, which Italy had now joined. An immediate declaration of war by Germany would have appealed to Austria-Hungary, but we did not press for it; we admitted the force of the German contentions, and we were satisfied with an assurance that assistance from Germany would be

forthcoming if Austria-Hungary were not equal to withstanding Italy's attacks alone.

It was in this connection, as well as for a general discussion of a situation which was now essentially more difficult, that I met the German Chancellor at the G.H.Q. in Pless on the 25th May; the Secretary of State, von Jagow, and the Chiefs of the General Staffs of the two armies, Generals von Falkenhayn and von Conrad, also being present. It was practically a continuation of the discussion which had taken place between the same parties at Teschen on the 7th May (Zimmermann was then Secretary of State), when the two premiers, Count Stürgkh and Count Tisza were present, and the Italian danger was already casting its grim shadows.

The military questions were cleared up and steps were taken to prevent the weakening of the front in the east or the west. Austria-Hungary hoped to be able to stand up against the new enemy with her own resources; but German help was loyally assured, should the progress of the campaign make it necessary.

We paid particular attention to the consolidation of our political fronts.

The outbreak of the Italian crisis brought the similar and equally serious problem of Rumania to the fore. Since the beginning of the war it had been the subject of great anxiety to the Central Powers. Much depended upon the nature of the relations that could be established between our alliance on the one side, and Rumania, Bulgaria, Turkey, and Greece on the other.

We arrived at a uniform point of view, although the complete uncertainty of the conditions made it impossible to lay down definite lines of policy.

It was worth noting that at this meeting peace was already discussed—peace by mutual agreement. The atmosphere was still too harsh for the tender plant to grow, but so strong was the impulse to realise this dim

hope that it could not be kept entirely out of the discussion.

Our not unfavourable military position suggested the possibility of an indecisive conclusion to the war, and therefore of a peace by mutual agreement. All the details are to-day quite meaningless. I can but record the fact that the ideas which animated us were far removed from those before and afterwards imputed to us by our enemies, as our imperialistic lust for domination.

CHAPTER III

RUMANIA

IN the world crisis, Rumania based her conduct from the beginning upon the same principles as Italy : to turn to as good account as possible a unique opportunity which would never occur again. There was a wide similarity in the relations of these two "allies" to the Central Powers, since the aims of both were concentrated on Austro-Hungarian territory.

Their procedure, too, was in many respects similar, as each was influenced by the other, subject to the differences in their respective positions. Italy was a great Power, Rumania a small one. By reason of her long coastline, Italy was entirely at the mercy of Great Britain, whether menaced or protected by that Power, whilst Rumania was exposed to attack on several sides, with a long boundary open to Austria-Hungary and practically no frontier defence against Russia. She was even more concerned than Italy not to intervene until she could do so with as little risk as possible.

Speaking generally, Rumania came along in Italy's wake, at a slower, more cautious pace, and arrived at her final decisions at a moment when she regarded the war as being essentially decided in favour of the Entente. She was mistaken, and had to pay the penalty of a disastrous campaign and a long occupation by the enemy. But in the final event her calculations proved correct. The bloody interlude of war brought severe reverses to Rumania, but the final success of Rumanian policy was achieved without fighting. This was typical of the outcome of the whole great world struggle. Decisive results were produced, or at any rate the prizes of battle were allotted, not by victory and defeat alone, but by the haphazard dispositions of a monstrous world convulsion, brought about by mass effects which, like a landslide, obliterated everything in their path.

We had from the start to give up any hope of seeing Rumania fight side by side with her allies. Only those who did not wish to admit the truth could have any illusions. Rumanian neutrality was determined by that of Italy. As early as the 28th July this was made perfectly clear to our ambassador by King Carol, though at the same time he expressed his deep personal regret. In adding that no Power could ever persuade *him* to take up arms against the monarchy, the King was no doubt sincere.

At a Crown Council held on the 4th August, Rumania's neutrality was formally decided upon, and Austria-Hungary was assured that it was an advantage to have her frontiers protected for several hundred miles by the special military precautions of Rumania.

This marked the commencement of what was to be Rumania's settled policy: to bide her time until the lines on which the European war was to develop should define themselves.

Not only were the sympathies of Rumania and of the Rumanian government entirely on the side of the Entente; the Prime Minister, Bratianu, never denied his complete confidence in their final victory. Meanwhile Rumania was at pains to remain on as good terms as possible with us and Germany in order not to get involved in premature complications. Bratianu never managed to key himself up to an attitude of benevolent neutrality. His first consideration was always for the Entente, especially as he already thought our military position very unfavourable in the autumn of 1914. King Carol, who was already very ill, was, and knew himself to be, completely isolated in this last tragic epoch of his life. Only the early news of battles won by us could have given him any hope of his policy of alliance becoming popular in the country.

On the 10th October his life came to an end in anxiety and sorrow.

After securing the agreement of the Opposition, the new régime confirmed Rumania's neutrality.

However, the consistency with which the Rumanian government maintained a policy favouring the Entente and directly hostile to Turkey, in dealing with the question of the passage of munitions, made it quite evident that the character of her neutrality had not changed. This would have been the only way in which the Central Powers could have rendered assistance to the Turkish capital in resisting the Anglo-French attack.

This prohibition materially assisted the endeavours of the Entente, and therefore contained an element of hostility to the allies of Turkey.

Up to the failure of the Dardanelles campaign, we were unable to induce Rumania to alter her policy. Nevertheless, even by the winter, Rumania did not consider the military situation sufficiently developed to make early decisions necessary. The terrible spectacle of the winter campaign in the Carpathians damped the enthusiasm for a similar venture, even of the most impatient politicians in Rumania.

Rumania hoped the spring would see matters cleared up and thought she could wait without risk, more especially as Italy was still unready and she had no ambition to act before that country, with which she stood in the closest relations.

As Italy's intentions developed in the spring, the war spirit in Rumania increased. But the progress of her preparations did not correspond to the growth of feeling.

Italy was bound to a date, whereas Rumania was free. Our great success in Galicia had made a deep impression in that country. Rumania thought she would wait for further developments, and see whether Italy's entry into the field would counterbalance the advantages we had gained.

Although the course of events has shown quite clearly

that it would have been a great mistake to have prematurely surrendered the Trentino to Italy as the price for her promise of neutrality, as we should thereby have weakened our power of resistance, we were to be tempted to have recourse to similar prophylactic measures in the analogous problem of Rumania, which was now becoming pressing. Instead of the Trentino, the Bukovina was at stake.

The outbreak of war with Italy brought the Rumanian danger into prominence. It had to be handled with the greatest care. Though Austro-Hungarian territory was more directly threatened, the military significance of a Rumanian attack was of equal importance to Germany.

Ways and means must be sought to avert the danger ; in fact no efforts should be omitted which had any prospect of securing the co-operation of Rumania, although that country had determined upon neutrality.

It was a part of Bratianu's non-committal policy in conversation never entirely to exclude the possibility that Rumania might conceivably at some time fight on the side of the Central Powers. In the meantime, although he was simultaneously negotiating with the Entente, he was constantly hinting in his talks with the representatives of our country and of Germany that a small concession of territory in the Bukovina and in the Banat would make it much easier for him to continue to carry out his obligations under the alliance. He was taking a leaf out of Italy's book. The prospect of active co-operation in return was never definitely held out, but it was suggested that even Rumania's neutrality was very important for us, and therefore worth a sacrifice.

Not unnaturally, such suggestions found a more friendly reception in Germany than in Austria-Hungary. After our great successes in the Eastern theatre of war, a period of inaction had supervened owing to the Russian shortage of munitions. The full force of the Italian

attack would not be felt for some weeks. But that would be the moment when the intervention of a new army on our side would be of supreme and perhaps decisive importance. The only possible army was the Rumanian. Every effort must therefore be made to secure their co-operation.

On the 3rd June 1915 Erzberger, a member of the Reichstag, came to Vienna, not on a mission, as he let it be understood, but with the knowledge of his government, in order to bring these facts home to me and to other politicians. And I soon came upon traces of his influence, as several Austrian members of the Reichsrat came to see me to urge that we should offer territory to Rumania and endeavour to conciliate the Rumanians within the monarchy if the co-operation of Rumania could thereby be secured.

Erzberger also put it to me personally that Rumania's decisions might be considerably influenced by our granting extensive concessions to national feeling in Rumania. He sent me, with a covering letter, a memorandum on this subject which he had submitted to the German Government.

In her view of the position Berlin certainly evinced a keen interest in our being conciliatory. In the middle of June the German Chancellor had an interview with Count Tisza at his own suggestion, the object of which was to persuade the Hungarian Prime Minister to satisfy the wishes of the Hungarian Rumanians more liberally. In this connection Bethmann-Hollweg had no success. Count Tisza had embarked upon a definite scheme of reform for the Rumanians and was negotiating it with their leaders. But he would not go beyond the limit of what in his opinion was essential to safeguard the unity of the kingdom of Hungary. And above all he resented the idea of carrying through the concessions which he had elaborated under pressure from Rumania

as the price of her political benevolence, and thereby starting on a downward course on which it might be difficult to check himself.

In this matter I could not but agree with Count Tisza. It would be impossible to maintain the structure of the monarchy, if the claims of neighbouring states to exercise a protectorate over their fellow-neutrals in Austria-Hungary were even admitted to discussion. There were compelling reasons of internal policy for placing the relations between the various races in the kingdom of Hungary upon a modern footing. Whether what Count Tisza had in mind would have satisfied requirements is debatable. In any case it made things much more difficult for him that the Rumanian political crisis should have coincided with his efforts at reform, so that every concession might seem a bribe to secure the favour, or blackmail to avert the hostility, of Rumania, and therefore lose much of its effect.

In territorial questions the arguments of Berlin had not been without effect upon Count Tisza. Not only did he think it worth while to sacrifice territory in the Bukovina—though not in Hungary—if Rumanian co-operation could thereby be secured, but on his return from Berlin he was not opposed to ceding Bukovinian provinces as the price of permission to send munitions through Rumania.

I myself would not have looked askance at the principle of ceding territory to Rumania in return for her active assistance, if there had been the slightest prospect of securing our object by this means. But in my opinion there was none ; and I therefore regarded this suggestion as pointless. On the other hand, I definitely refused to cede territory in return for the right to transport munitions. Rumania would probably have refused the bargain herself, since in the munitions question was

involved the whole network of her relations to the Entente; but the offer itself, considering the absurd disproportion between the service and its payments, would, whether accepted or refused, have possibly damaged our prestige in Rumania and would have failed in its object. It would have pointed the way to further extortions both in large and in small matters.

The further course of events brought the proper solution of this critical problem. German enterprise succeeded in organising the production of munitions in Constantinople itself, in sufficient quantities to make possible the famous repulse of the attacking forces of the Entente.

As, in the meantime, influential quarters here, and especially in Berlin, clung to the idea that the surrender of Southern Bukovina would secure the Rumanian army for our front, I made up my mind to put the matter to a decisive test. On the 22nd June I informed the Chancellor of my intention of making Rumania an offer, which should remain open for one month, of the Rumanian districts in the Bukovina as the price for the support of her whole army. I did this on the day of the recapture of Lemberg, a very favourable moment.

On the 25th June the Chancellor came to visit Vienna with the Secretary of State von Jagow. I was glad of the opportunity of explaining more precisely to Herr Bethmann-Hollweg my attitude in the question of ceding territory, which still approximated closely to his own. The Chancellor did not fail to appreciate my arguments. In order to remove all doubts we agreed to ask Bratianu at what price he would permit the passage of munitions through his country. We had not long to wait for a definite reply that Rumania would in no circumstances permit the passage of munitions. The more we pressed this matter, the more important did it appear to Bratianu to withhold his consent.

On this occasion, too, my meeting with the German Chancellor was marked by complete agreement in our fundamental points of view, even if it was inevitable that individual questions should be viewed from a different angle, according to the German or Austro-Hungarian standpoint. This produced differences of opinion regarding the actual method of procedure, as in the case under consideration, but with a keen endeavour to reach an agreement ; and where this failed, that side would give way which was less immediately affected by the point at issue.

Bethmann-Hollweg and I were also united in our determination, while throwing all our energies into the conduct of the war, always to be ready for peace. For in the midst of the discussion of the war problems which had brought us together, we also spoke of peace, which we already kept steadily in view in the still distant future, and to which all our efforts were directed. We were at one in our determination to let no opportunity pass which would legitimately allow us to approach nearer to this goal.

The Chancellor was still in Vienna when, on the 27th June, we received from our ambassador, Count Czernin, the first news regarding the reception of our offer in Bukarest. It threw a vivid light on the situation. The reply, divested of all polite phrases, did not amount to a refusal, but indicated plainly the intention of waiting to see how the military situation would develop during the next month, that is to say—co-operation, if by that time we should have achieved a decisive victory over the Russians.

There were only two ways of influencing Rumania : a confident attitude, and success in the field.

On the 21st July I reminded Bratianu that the month had nearly elapsed. The 26th July passed without any further reference to the matter.

Rumania now settled down to a policy of delay for an indefinite period, in accordance with Bratianu's convinced opinion that the war would still last a very long time, and that his country must not allow itself to be involved until it was quite clear which way things were going, so that she could join in the final battles on the victorious side with the least possible effort. In the meantime, therefore, all relations must be maintained and all possibilities kept open, and, incidentally, she must not lose a chance of doing good business. Thus there followed a period of active trade between the Central Powers and Rumania, to their mutual advantage. Long contracts for the delivery of corn were concluded, which were not without political significance. They offered a certain guarantee for the continuance of normal relations.

We did not refrain from reminding Rumania of the great political interests which formerly had led her to associate herself with the Central Powers. In the alliance an important share in the task of setting up a powerful barrier against Russian encroachment on Central Europe and the Balkans, fell to Rumania. This policy was, too, the only right one for Rumania as long as the two Powers, Austria-Hungary and Russia, between whom she lay wedged, existed. Since the catastrophe Russia threatens the world only with social disruption, and the Austro-Hungarian monarchy no longer exists, while Rumania alone, the central link in this policy, has survived; so that her conduct in the war may be regarded without prejudice as having profited by the destinies of others, rather than as having determined them. In spite of all Bratianu's confidence in the victory of the Entente, Rumania's attitude was not exclusively adjusted to that eventuality. She was at pains to be prepared for any possibility and to keep a free hand as long as possible. As late as May 1916,

Bratianu reckoned with the possibility that an indecisive war might lead to a peace of the *status quo*. As long as he thought there was any chance of this, he held that the policy for Rumania was to refrain from taking part in the war, and save herself incalculable and unnecessary sacrifices. In that case her general position, including her relations to the Central Powers, would remain unchanged.

Alternatively, one group of Powers might be decisively beaten. In his opinion, such an event must still be far distant, and Rumania had plenty of time quietly to await the signs of such a decisive turn of events as could not occur in a moment. Whether she acted in accordance with sentiment or not, the necessity would then arise for her to take part on the winning side in the final battles, for as short a time as possible. In his heart of hearts Bratianu was quite certain from the beginning which side this would be. He had considered every eventuality, but he committed one serious error of judgment—he grossly miscalculated the right moment for intervention.

Brusilov's successful offensive in June 1916 roused keen excitement in Rumania, where events had been watched with anxious suspense. All her hopes and desires revived, as did the negotiations with the Entente. The Rumanian government began to put its decisions into action, as was indicated by partial movements of troops towards our frontier. Austria-Hungary protested emphatically. We could not yet have recourse to more effective measures, since we lacked the necessary available forces and we had good reason not to precipitate the development of the situation by ultimatums and noisy but insufficient concentrations of troops.

Bratianu was still not at all in a hurry. He carried on lively negotiations with the Entente, but would not bind himself to any time limit. Moreover, the delivery

of the stipulated raw material still required considerable time, and he would like, if possible, to get in the harvest quietly.

But towards the end of summer we could not count upon Rumania's continued neutrality, unless we succeeded in holding up the Russians and completely routing them. Now, Bratianu thought that these battles would see the end of the war in the East. He felt that his moment was coming.

Rumania openly prosecuted her military preparations. Bratianu excused them as being forced on him by the outcry of the opposition. We were fully informed as to the military situation, but inadequately prepared for it. We accepted Bratianu's asseverations that he wished to maintain neutrality, and negotiated with the Rumanian government for the purchase of the new harvest, without making any useless reservation as to Bratianu's policy. We were unable and unwilling to put forward any counter-proposals, and could oppose to the munificent offers of the Entente, which were all at the expense of Austria-Hungary, only Bessarabia, which we still had to conquer; conservative opposition in Rumania was proving ineffective against Bratianu's popular policy, and so there was nothing for us to do but to contrive as far as possible to secure our almost undefended frontiers. On the 18th July I caused our ambassador at Bukarest to make a final attempt to convince King Ferdinand of the moral turpitude of the gross breach of faith which he was contemplating in joining those who were fighting his former allies. The King's reply was an embarrassed stutter, while he protested that he had no designs against us, and achieved the remark that even Bratianu, while wishing "to be in" any final partition of Austria-Hungary, did not wish to bring it about!

The following weeks were characterised by Bratianu's constant assertions that he wished to maintain neutrality,

but was severely pressed by the Entente ; in the meantime he was carrying on the most active negotiations with them. The principal terms in the agreement which they proposed to Rumania were : secrecy ; the allocation of certain Austro-Hungarian territories to Rumania ; the conclusion of a military convention ; the free passage of Russian troops through Rumania ; the fixing of a short time limit between the conclusion of the agreement and Rumania's entry into the war. But Rumania did not want to come in until a sufficient supply of war material and of Russian troops would be available to cover her rear against Bulgaria ; and she demanded the simultaneous commencement of General Sarraill's Salonika army, which was in readiness. All these wishes were granted, since the Entente regarded Rumania's intervention as very urgent.

And now occurred precisely what Bratianu had not foreseen. Although he was already bound to the Entente, he would have preferred to wait until he was certain that Rumania was not meeting any great risk. But the Entente, weary of constant evasion, compelled her to come in by the ultimatum of 24th August, which gave notice that a Russian army of 100,000 men would immediately enter her territory. It would depend upon Rumania whether they came as friends or as foes.

The Crown Council of the 27th August decided in favour of war, although only a few days before the King had told Count Czernin that he hoped to be able to remain neutral, though he certainly gave no definite promise, and Bratianu had stated most definitely a few hours before the Council was held, and at a moment when the Rumanian declaration of war, signed by the Foreign Minister, Porumbaru, was already in the hands of the Rumanian ambassador at Vienna, that he " would, and could, and should remain neutral."

Bratianu paid for his miscalculation with the severe

defeat of Rumania, which indeed was the be-all and end-all of that country's military achievements in the war.

The final event, through our break-up, brought Rumania the fulfilment of her wishes.

From the point of view of the Greater Rumania ambitions, Bratianu had thrown in his lot with the side which promised more advantages. His success was one of the by-products of the world catastrophe, and ran counter to political morality, international justice, and the right of self-determination. Brought about by the force of actual circumstance, it threw upon the scrap-heap all the various patient efforts of our foreign policy, which had sought for so many years to achieve the security of Rumanian interest within the framework of the existing constitution, though intensive reform activities within the "nationalities" territories of the two states of the monarchy would have been an indispensable corollary. In this connection, too, a foreign policy promising success was impossible for any length of time, unless adequately supported by corresponding home policy.

Can the solution of the whole Rumanian problem be regarded as a final one? Will the young Rumanian kingdom be able to absorb historical entities such as the thousand-year-old Siebenbürgen and the Banat? Will it, moreover, be able to maintain the extension of its territory to the west, beyond the natural boundary of Siebenbürgen, right into the depths of Hungary, where it is true that Rumanians live, but whose economic interests are absolutely and entirely bound up with the west? Will the Hungarians, Széklers, and Saxons of the districts which have been surrendered tolerate the foreign yoke of a country by which they have not been conquered, but to which they have been forcibly presented, and with which they have nothing in common? Will Rumania be able to hold Bessarabia?

These are questions the solution of which will occupy a prominent place in the life of the countries and peoples concerned, as they enter upon their new conditions.

The new countries between Germany and Russia, some of which have been increased and others cut down in size, have not found their equilibrium. They have yet to seek a way to achieving the internal development and the association with foreign groups which will save them from "Balkanisation" and mutual hostilities. The historico-geographical law of the converging Danube basin will assert itself, since it is based, not upon the ephemeral results of international conflicts, but upon unalterable natural conditions.

The more neighbouring peoples are marked off according to purely national and essential economic principles, the easier will it be for them to achieve that measure of co-operation which the smaller states of Central Europe so sorely need to restore their shattered economic life.

CHAPTER IV

POLAND

FROM the time when I first took office I was obliged to give my closest attention to the problem of Poland.

On the outbreak of war, when all the great European interests came into conflict, nobody gave a thought to Poland. It did not seem either desirable or necessary to any of the three Powers concerned in the partition, to disturb the Polish problem. And yet scarcely had the troops of the Central Powers entered the territory of Congress Poland, when the nation stirred in its deep sleep. Every advance of our troops, who were joined by Polish volunteers from Galicia, aroused keener hopes, but the fear of reverses kept in check any rapid development of patriotic enthusiasm amongst the people who had been enslaved and intimidated, almost to the point of resignation, through the long Russian domination. Only quite gradually they awoke to the possibility of a regeneration. It was welcomed with joy amongst those who had kept alive the national tradition, but often caused a sense of uneasiness to the masses who had grown accustomed to the Russian yoke, because of the complete uncertainty as to the future.

Be that as it may, from the moment when the Russians had to evacuate Warsaw and its fortress, Poland was resurrected. This was the first great fact produced by the world war, though without the deliberate intention of any of the parties concerned, and it was a fact that had come to stay. It would be well for all the groping diplomacy that has since busied itself with Poland, not to deceive itself on this point. The object of this diplomacy was to make the not wholly welcome new arrival serviceable to the objects of the war, and to prepare for her a place in the new European scheme where she might prove of the greatest use to her involuntary liberators. But when the nation once felt

herself freed of her fetters, she wished not to put on new ones, but to begin a life of independence. She was fortunate in that from the moment of her liberation our enemies too were well-disposed to her. Even Russia hastened to promise mountains of gold simply to prevent her from being absorbed completely by the other side. The western Poles certainly had a strong inducement to hasten the establishment of Poland, as thereby the hopes of the Russian Poles would immediately be directed towards union with their fellow-countrymen in Austria-Hungary and Germany.

Such was the simple position revealed at the time of the conquest of Warsaw (5th August 1915), which had to be reconciled with the important interests of the liberating Powers.

Though the resurrection may have been inevitably bound up with the course of events, Austria-Hungary and Germany were to a certain extent free to determine what attitude they should take up towards the product of their successes in the field. The Allied Powers had equal rights and claims in conquered Poland, but the nature of their own Polish possessions placed them in essentially different relations to the Polish problem. Hence arose the difficult and complicated problem of reaching an understanding between ourselves and Germany as the successive stages of the question developed.

During the war Polish affairs sometimes severely tested the harmonious relations between Austria-Hungary and Germany. Not only were the individual interests very different, of the two Allied Powers closely involved in the problem, but their point of view frequently changed with the course of events, and each side was apt to feel at times that the solution favoured by the other might damage his own interests, and this was inconsistent with the strengthening of our political system for the

future. It never came to dispute between us, and even at times when differences of opinion regarding the scope and method of our treatment of the Polish problem were most acute, the desire to find a way of reconciling opposing interests always prevailed. And a way was always found. It cost a certain amount of time, but that too had its advantages, as it made possible a more thorough consideration and a clearer exposition of the problem. For the third factor too, the Poles themselves, was a changeable one. They awoke slowly to the realisation of the fateful days through which they were passing, and to an examination of their position.

In approaching the Polish problem I was influenced, not only by immediate military and political considerations, but by the consciousness that a vital question for the Austro-Hungarian monarchy clamoured for solution. If Poland was to continue free of Russian domination, the territorial *status quo* would in future be impossible for Austria-Hungary. Only in Galicia had Polish national life maintained and developed itself. That country must either draw the new Poland to herself, or follow Poland's fate. Austria-Hungary must either lose Galicia or bring Congress Poland into some close relationship with the monarchy. Intermediate solutions could not create any permanent conditions, for it would not be possible seriously to repeat the old experiment of partition, which had just collapsed in the cataclysm of the world war. Such a solution might have introduced an insuperable irredentist problem into the organism of the two allied countries. A condominium in Poland would have been a sure source of dissension, as every attempt at joint sovereignty always has been. To give up our interest in Poland, and to relinquish her entirely to Germany, would perhaps protect us from losing Galicia immediately, but not

from its eventual loss, would have embittered the Poles against us, would have put the monarchy in a false position to Germany as regards the results of the war, and would be in direct opposition to the century-old traditions of Austria and Hungary.

I was clear on one point from the beginning: the Poles might be a strong element, but in no case must they be a victim of our policy. This was ruled out, not only by her position in the monarchy and the sympathy which her people enjoyed throughout Austria-Hungary; it was ruled out, too, by an impartial survey of the world position.

The dual form of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and the fact that Galicia was a crown territory of the State of Austria were difficulties, but must not be allowed to make impossible the consideration of a closer association with Poland, if that appeared desirable to the Poles.

Even to-day, when the force of circumstances, brushing aside all previous attempts at solution, has made of Poland a powerful, nationally united country entirely standing on her own feet, Austria-Hungary's Polish policy is perhaps of more than retrospective interest. The rebirth of Poland has brought, not the end, but only the transformation of her relations to the countries which constituted the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. These relations are based upon permanent factors and upon an ancient cultural solidarity. Unlike Russia, Poland will always gravitate towards the west. Upon this fact, her future relations to the Succession States will be based. After her liberation, Poland needed a support, as she quickly appreciated her position, and did not wish again to be exposed in political isolation to the danger of Russia. It was not agreed beforehand to what extent and when the Poles should enjoy the protection of the other Powers. Austria-Hungary and Germany fulfilled an obvious duty in immediately concerning themselves about her and seeking in con-

junction the most suitable form for introducing Poland again to the European state family, under the ægis of their protection. As Poland's status, of which we had laid the foundation, became more settled and came to be recognised, or at least perceived, by the rest of Europe, we also extended the scope of our measures giving effect to it, first declaring her independence, then setting up a Council of State, and finally granting the Polish nation the full power of self-determination over her destinies. Then came the catastrophe. Our Polish policy was overshadowed by the events at the conclusion of the war, but its development was carried on along the lines which we had prepared. The scaffolding was shattered, but the building stood firm and could be completed. Poland began her new existence in the enjoyment of that real national independence which Austria-Hungary had intended her to have under her own protection. No portion of the monarchy grudged Poland her revival. No one felt it as a personal loss, and everybody felt it as an act of historical justice. The Polish policy of the community of the Succession States casts a ray of light upon relations in the future, which now certainly only show a confused outline, but which in the meantime are clearly seeking the ways of ancient affinities.

Though their results may seem to be obliterated, the last phases of our and Germany's joint treatment of the Polish problem are, for another reason, in my opinion, not only of historical but also of political interest. Germany, as well as the political successors of the earlier Austro-Hungarian monarchy, have a right to learn what was the significance of the occasional rumours of a hitch in the confidential conversations between the Allied governments, and of essential differences of opinion and apparently irreconcilable antitheses arising between Austria-Hungary

and Germany. Such differences did actually occur. They were due to the different aspect in which Polish affairs presented themselves to us and to Germany, as we did not always see them from the same angle. I feel that I must briefly recapitulate the points of view that determined my attitude at the important stages of the question, as I kept the double aim in view: a sane development of the Polish problem which would harmonise with Austro-Hungarian interests, and a due regard for Germany. The first months of the war were occupied with the opening battles. Galicia and Poland were mere theatres of war. There was little time to reflect that the ground over which the battles raged, and the soil which was trampled by the armies, was receiving new life.

From about the middle of May 1915 the necessity became apparent of concerning oneself about Polish politics, and of taking steps to come to an agreement with Germany in the matter.

One realised the importance of treating the nervously passive population of Congress Poland as a liberator and not as a conqueror, and of setting up an administration in the territories which came to be occupied. We could not expect violent demonstrations of joy on the part of the population. Our success was not yet sufficiently complete, the fear of the possible return of the Russians was great, and it was difficult to shake off the lethargy into which the Russian domination, which for a long time had been of a corrupting rather than an oppressive nature, had lulled the masses of the people.

The situation required forbearance and circumspection. It was not until the victory of Krasnik (3rd July 1915) that the whole country suddenly awoke. She now felt, according to the observations of competent Poles, that the progress of the Central Powers was irresistible, and that a great turning-point in the destiny of the nation had been reached. The early capture of Warsaw was

already counted upon with certainty. That would be an opportune moment for an encouraging proclamation, and an indication of our intentions.

I supported this view and it was decided, in agreement with the military and other important sections of the monarchy and in Germany, that identical proclamations by the army commanders should emphasise the significance of the capture of Warsaw for the revival of Poland.

On the 5th August Warsaw was taken by German and Evangorod by Austro-Hungarian troops, and now began the swift triumphal progress which was to deliver the whole of Congress Poland into the hands of the Central Powers. We naturally desired, and indeed it was just, that administrative control in the capital should be joint. The German High Command opposed this for reasons of prestige connected with the fact that the Germans had effected the conquest, but also on practical grounds connected with the technique of administration, which were worthy of serious consideration. We therefore agreed to leave Germany in sole control of the administration of Warsaw.

But there were even more important matters to discuss: the fate of the whole country. The politicians of Galicia had already thoroughly mastered the subject and no longer knew of any boundary between Galicia and Poland. Though sympathetic to the Poles, Hungary was primarily anxious to preserve the dualism, while Austria would be faced with an entirely new relationship with Galicia.

The Polish problem had gained in actuality in proportion to the rapidity with which the Allied troops completed the conquest of Congress Poland. The occupation of Warsaw especially had made the question of issuing a proclamation to the population, and of setting up an administration in the capital of Poland, a pressing one. I agreed with the Chancellor, at our discussion in

Berlin on the 13th August, to issue a friendly proclamation to the population of Warsaw, which would not commit us in any way politically, and which would be all the more warmly received as the populace had not merely conducted itself in a correct and accommodating manner, but had given an unconcealed demonstration of their sheer joy at the expulsion of the Russians.

The exchange of views as to the main principles which should govern the future fate of Poland took up a large proportion of my conversations with the Chancellor. He agreed with me that the circumstances were such as to make it desirable to elucidate our attitude towards the various principal possibilities.

The Chancellor dismissed the possibility of Poland being attached to Germany, a solution which Austria-Hungary in any case could not have accepted, and we could not think of handing Poland back to Russia if the fortunes of war did not change. We had in Poland a product of the war which both parties were entitled to deal with according to the rights of conquest, having a due regard for their own future security in the East and for the prosperity of the liberated districts.

It therefore only remained, as the Chancellor readily agreed, to bring Congress Poland into association with Austria-Hungary on terms which were left open to closer definition in the future.

Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg's only anxiety regarding such a solution was as to the future position of the Germans in Austria. In raising this question he was careful to point out that he had no wish whatever to interfere in the internal affairs of Austria; but the whole of public opinion in Germany was interested in this point and must be reassured with regard to it in order to give its full agreement to the solution in question. He would therefore be grateful to learn in what form Austria-Hungary conceived the possible association of Congress Poland with the monarchy.

I replied that in the event of Poland being separated from Russia, we too could see no practicable solution, whether we liked it or not, except her union with Austria-Hungary, in spite of all the difficulties which would arise from her incorporation. In addition to the fact of conquest there might soon be another, more compelling reason which perhaps would make it quite impossible for us to relinquish Poland, the acquisition of which had certainly not been a war aim. The development of events would entail a long interval in the operations on the Russian front, during which, under our joint administration, Poland would not only settle down, but might also play an active part in her own emancipation and reconstruction, and this we would neither wish nor be able to prevent. I said that I was aware that the Chancellor fully agreed with me that our provisional régime in Poland must—whatever happens—be thoroughly friendly and conciliatory, so that even if Poland were lost again we should leave a good memory behind us. But after such conditions had been in force for a short period it would be impossible on merely practical political grounds for anybody to suggest to Poland that she should again place herself under Russian domination.

Our politicians therefore concerned themselves favourably or unfavourably with the idea of the accession of Poland, and though the ideas regarding the problem which had arisen unexpectedly and was certainly complicated were not yet defined even in their essentials, certain possibilities at any rate could be excluded from the very beginning.

The dualistic nature of the monarchy did not admit of the addition of a third member on an identical co-ordinated footing, that is to say, of a *trialism*. Poland could therefore, as Hungary would remain outside the arrangement, constitutionally be brought into association only with Austria in conjunction with Galicia.

The arrangements necessary to carry this into effect would be entirely outside the scope of the existing dualism, and would constitute an internal Austrian problem the practical solution of which would still have to be found, and would have to be subject to the guiding principle that nobody, including the Germans in Austria, should be damnified. The kingdom of Poland would without doubt attain a high degree of independence ; this, while leaving her the management of her own affairs, must also guarantee the ancient Austrian crown territories against political oppression and the danger of being in a minority where their own sphere of interest was concerned. In fact the relative influence of the German element in old Austria could only be increased by the natural working out of these conditions.

I promised to give the Chancellor confidential information of the principal features of the new constitution to be proposed, as soon as it had been decided upon.

An exhaustive discussion of the circumstances as they were then revealed made it quite clear that Bethmann and I could not have any essential difference of opinion as to the action the position in Poland called for. The predominant rôle which Austria-Hungary was called upon to play with regard to Poland arose from tradition and from actual circumstances. On the other hand, we fully appreciated the necessity for carrying out such strategic and commercial conditions as could alone induce Germany, who had great interests to protect in Poland, to accept the Austro-Polish solution. At the time it was possible only to give a general indication of these conditions. It was principally a question of improving the frontier and of maintaining Germany's commercial *status quo* in Poland.

Nevertheless the essential divergence of the Austro-Hungarian and German point of view as to the direction to be given to Polish policy was already plainly per-

ceptible. Germany had two important points to maintain : the inviolability of her own Polish territories and the thick network of German commercial interests in Russian Poland. Austria-Hungary's position in the analogous problems was more easily susceptible of adaptation. Austria-Hungary as well as Germany regarded it as essential that their successes in the field should not be rewarded by loss or danger to her own territory. It was comparatively easy for Austria to effect the incorporation of Congress Poland, as Galicia, whose nationality was strongly developed, provided receptive framework, whereas Prussia, whose policy in the Polish portions of her territory had been beset with thorns, would have sensibly felt the effects of any considerable increase in her Polish population. Another consideration was that the Poles were not unnaturally more attracted by the conditions of their fellow-nationals in Galicia than in Posen. To set up Congress Poland as an independent state did not at that time come under consideration, as it was feared that in its insecurity it would be the plaything of surrounding influences, and would be the breeding-place of an irredentism threatening the internal security of Austria and Prussia. Hence, without being part of the government's programme, a widespread tendency soon revealed itself in Germany to bring Poland as effectively as possible within her sphere of influence in order to safeguard the extensive military and economic German interests in that country, and to prevent irredentist interests from thriving. Austria-Hungary, on the other hand, protected herself most effectively from the danger by taking advantage of the elasticity of her framework to enable Congress Poland to be incorporated in it, and thereby to accord the bulk of the Polish nation such a measure of national unity as to reconcile them more easily to the exclusion of the fraction which had been firmly incorporated in the State of Prussia.

This antithesis gave rise to the variations in the German and Austro-Hungarian Polish policy which assumed the equal rights of the two liberating Powers. It was characterised by the sincere desire to show consideration for conflicting interests often difficult to harmonise, and was partly determined by the progressive development of national self-consciousness amongst the liberated Poles, who, shaking off their diffident reluctance to adopt any attitude at all during the war, soon came to aspire to unity and to a polity in association perhaps with Austria-Hungary, and finally to the formula advanced by one of their leading men : "*Le plus de territoire avec le plus d'indépendance possible.*"

The outlines of the Polish problem only gradually emerged from the background of the events of the war. The creation of separate bases for the two armies in the field involved a division of the provisional military administration in the kingdom, with two military governors-general, one in Warsaw and the other in Lublin. This of course did not imply any intention of partitioning Poland anew in the future ; but this dual administration produced in the whole nation a strong and unanimous feeling against any idea of a new partition of Poland. "Better return to Russia," was the general sentiment. I myself never for a moment entertained the idea of a partition between Austria-Hungary and Germany. I should have regarded it as the greatest mistake that could have been committed.

Germany's interest in Poland had been powerfully excited from the beginning of these events. Economic and military considerations stood in the foreground. Germany had not merely to preserve the dominant commercial and industrial position which before the war she enjoyed in Poland, and through Poland, in Russia. She also felt called upon to see that the future settlement of Poland should leave open all the possibilities

of rich development of German enterprise and acquisitiveness. The organisations of interests concerned and the central administrative bodies of the empire actually went to great lengths in this connection in their proposals and public utterances.

The German High Command was itself busily engaged on the problem as to how the eastern frontiers of the empire could best be protected from the danger of Russian aggression in the future. There was as yet no movement worth mentioning for uniting Poland to Germany. Everybody in Germany could understand the obvious reasons which made the addition of a Polish population of ten to twelve millions, however loosely held together, highly undesirable for the empire. Austria-Hungary, on the other hand, having successfully maintained a substantial Polish element enjoying extensive national autonomy within the realms of the monarchy, was justified in regarding the eventual incorporation of the kingdom of Poland as a task which might be difficult, but was quite capable of solution.

In these early stages of the question the Chancellor and I saw the dangers of an entirely independent Polish state in the same light, and for the time being did not take this possibility into consideration at all, as being very precarious for Poland herself.

Without our intention, the Polish problem had arisen as the first result of the war. Our duty was sincerely to take counsel as to which solution of it was most consistent with the future security of our alliance as against the outside world, and with the internal stability of the two countries, and also which was best calculated to promote the national development of the Poles. The Chancellor and I soon arrived at agreement on the main principle that when the kingdom of Poland had been separated from Russia it should be attached to the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, as a country with very extensive autonomous powers.

We agreed in recognising this solution as the most practicable, without concealing from ourselves its difficulties, but also without overlooking the fact that any other solution appeared to involve still greater difficulties.

On this basis the further exchange of ideas with the German cabinet proceeded, and on this basis the Austrian government set about the task of examining as to how the kingdom of Poland should take the place of the kingdom of Galicia, and in association with that country be incorporated on a broader basis, with its own government and its own parliament. Bethmann-Hollweg's acceptance of the principle of our political programme in Poland was subject to certain conditions for the protection of German interests in that country. I accepted this as a matter of course, with the proviso that the conditions, which had been only generally indicated and of which I had not been precisely informed, should be decided by agreement.

Meanwhile there was a marked delay in the communication of these conditions, which was no doubt due to the fact that very various German interests of an economic, financial, and military nature were involved, and the departments concerned had to be consulted.

The discussions on the Polish question were conducted confidentially in these preliminary stages, but busy rumour spread much of their content abroad, and this was eagerly seized upon by the press. As early as our discussion in November 1915 the Chancellor had mentioned to me that in German public opinion a feeling was abroad which found it difficult to reconcile itself to the war bringing Austria-Hungary substantial increases of territory, whilst Germany, after giving up Belgium, would at best get off with an adjustment of her frontier in the East. Bethmann-Hollweg intimated that this feeling would grow and might come to exercise powerful pressure

upon the decisions of the German government in the Polish question.

As the Chancellor did not identify himself with this point of view, I confined myself to expressing my surprise, pointing out that what I had had in mind had never been the "annexation" of Poland against the wishes of the nation, but what seemed at the time from the point of view of both Powers the most suitable method of including Poland in our alliance, and I remarked that the weighty German objections against incorporating a large Polish population in the German Empire lost none of their cogency through the fact that Germany might not gain any considerable concession of territory elsewhere.

Taking everything into consideration, the Chancellor and I agreed that we could still take our time in order to avoid friction, and then with quiet deliberation go into the Polish question.

But this interval could not be prolonged unduly. There was no *status quo* capable of being maintained unaltered and suspended when a decision came to be taken. Everything was in a state of flux. The sentiments of the populace in the kingdom of Poland changed materially after the Russian retreat. Fear of the return of their earlier masters tended to disappear; they became more and more concerned with the problem of Poland's future. Appreciation of the dangers of an entirely independent Poland thrown upon her own resources began to grow. Meanwhile our public departments felt the pressure of a people who were growing in national self-consciousness; they often found it difficult to exercise all the reserve they should, and to give their regulations such a colourless character as would prevent the people from placing extravagant interpretations upon them in accordance with their desires or their fears. There were powerful individual influences

too, which could not always be kept strictly within the bounds of that complete reserve which was called for by an impartial refusal to commit ourselves to any definite line of policy. But as these influences were not homogeneous they were calculated to produce confusion. As we could no longer hope for a short war which would have permitted such incidents to pass over without effect, it did not appear advisable to maintain in Poland indefinitely a pure administration of occupation, and we felt called upon gradually to establish certain definite conditions and as far as possible to put into practice much of what we wished to secure for Poland through our peace terms.

As for a long time we had heard nothing from Germany, whose conditions for our joint Polish programme we were awaiting, I felt, towards the end of February 1916, that the time had come to press the Chancellor to go into the problem with me on its merits.

Up to that time I had not been in touch with any persons in Congress Poland. Galician politicians, on the other hand, not unnaturally showed the keenest interest in their liberated fellow-countrymen, with whose fate they already began to identify themselves. They could not fail to realise that as things stood it was impossible to give them any idea as to their future and that of their fellows. Everything depended upon the future course of the war, upon Germany's agreement, upon the concurrence of the two states of the monarchy, and finally upon the Polish nation itself, without whose consent a lasting solution was unthinkable. In these circumstances I felt it incumbent, in spite of my sincere sympathy for their country, to maintain a certain reserve towards the Polish politicians to save them from disappointment.

As the result of various delays, the discussions with the Chancellor were not resumed until the 14th and 15th

April 1916 at Berlin. I was now faced with a complete change of view on the part of Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg regarding the Polish question, an altered attitude which I had already recognised from several indications. The Chancellor informed me that as the result of his recent observations and a closer examination of the question in general, his view of the Polish question had undergone a change. The only solution which Germany could see, having due regard to all the interests concerned, would be to make Congress Poland a buffer state, dependent upon Germany.

In reply to Bethmann-Hollweg's observation I began by pointing out that if his attitude and intentions in regard to Poland had changed, this was of the greatest importance to Austria-Hungary, but that the arguments which he had brought forward were not calculated to shake me in my adhesion to the policy which I had come to advocate in Berlin. This is not the place to describe the discussion which then took place. It was fruitful in results, but did not have a convincing effect on either side. It was the beginning of the long series of differences of opinion between Austria-Hungary and Germany, and the many changes of programme occasioned by their attempts to harmonise the complicated interests connected with the solution of the Polish problem, which even in one's own camp were not viewed by everybody in quite the same light. If a right and permanent solution was to be found, the difficulties must be eliminated, especially as, the two Powers concerned having an absolutely equal vote, a solution was quite impossible unless they agreed.

It was impossible that the basis of the solution should be that Austria-Hungary and Germany should use their power as conquerors, and should so fashion Poland as to involve themselves in the least possible embarrassment for the moment. That could have been carried

through mechanically, but would not have created a lasting arrangement. It would have been a mistake, like many of the dictates of the Entente in the peace treaties which are preventing the world from settling down.

In Poland we had to follow the growth of the idea of national revival which we had roused, retain what was essential and give way in unessentials.

In the long, memorable period of the Polish negotiations, even when opinions were most sharply divided on essential points, Austria-Hungary and Germany never lost the sense of the necessity of arriving at an agreement. There were regrettably long intervals for consideration, which led to proposals for compromises with temporary solutions, leaving the way open for further development. In the meantime the chorus of the most closely affected but as yet unconsulted party, the Polish nation, became more and more vocal.

The proposal of a buffer state of Poland, put forward by the Chancellor on the 14th April 1916 in Berlin, was characterised by the words "under the protection of Germany." At first sight it might appear as though it were a question of creating an independent Poland instead of a Poland to be annexed by Austria-Hungary. But this did not go to the root of the matter. Austria-Hungary had in mind not an "annexation," but an organic, but not subordinated, incorporation in conjunction with Galicia; whilst the German idea could not be regarded as complete independence, or else the protection of the German Empire did not amount to anything. The difference between the German solution and our own, therefore, lay principally in the substitution of Germany for Austria-Hungary as the partner of Poland. And this I regarded as unacceptable, having regard to our essential interests and what I knew of

Polish sentiment. As we were both determined to continue to seek agreement we were at pains to examine alternative proposals. I acted on the assumption that such proposals must lie halfway between the two stand-points, but that the solution arrived at must be susceptible of further development along the lines of Polish independence. I wanted to adapt myself to the German point of view as far as, in my opinion, was consistent with preventing the question from getting on the lines which offered no prospect of a permanent solution.

Moreover, I could not overlook the fact that Germany had just saved us from the worst consequences of Brusilov's break-through at Luck, and therefore it would have been inopportune to have failed in consideration for the German point of view.

In the meantime general public opinion in Germany, which at the beginning had shown little zest for Polish questions, was beginning to associate itself with the political, commercial, and industrial circles which had been keenly interested from the start, as an element not to be ignored in our negotiations with the German government, and not unnaturally exercised its influence on the government attitude. The Chancellor's complete change of standpoint on the 14th April must have been influenced by the keen interest which the German population had begun to take in Poland.

Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg had very clearly perceived the difficulties which would arise either from the association of Poland with Germany, whose uniform structure would have been seriously threatened by the inclusion of twelve million Poles, or by the immediate creation of an entirely independent Polish state, which would have led either to new conflicts with Russia or to the complete predominance of the Russian element amongst the Poles. Hence the Chancellor, too, had from the beginning had in mind Poland's association

with Austria-Hungary as the solution most in harmony with the interests of the two Central Powers.

However, a wave of public feeling was now beginning to manifest itself in Germany, which left the official point of view far behind. While certain sections adopted the slogan "Germany must hold what her sword has conquered," the heightened interest in Poland was prompted principally by economic considerations. An elaborate and effective pamphlet literature, cleverly circulated, and inspired by the most powerful industrial and commercial groups, painted the profits to be derived from these rich lands in the most alluring colours. Proposals were advocated for incorporating Poland as an imperial territory or as a federal state. If Austria-Hungary was considered, partition or condominium was generally suggested; but association with the monarchy was more and more generally indicated as a solution entirely unsatisfactory to Germany.

It was in this atmosphere that the Chancellor had evolved the proposal of a "buffer state," to which I now had to define my attitude.

We continued for a time, in letters and conversation, to try to persuade each other, and then in July 1916 I put forward a carefully thought-out scheme, in which I declared myself in agreement with the principle (subject to certain important limitations) of setting up a sovereign Polish state as an hereditary kingdom.

On the other hand, I declined the German government's offer that certain territories within the Lublin administration, and certain mining districts in Western Poland, should be incorporated in the monarchy, on the condition that Germany should give up any claim to accession of Polish territory, even on the pretext of rectification of her boundaries. I felt that neither cabinet could fail to be guided by the consideration that any encroachment upon Polish territory, which had remained

untouched during the whole period since the partition, would arouse the bitterest feelings in the Polish nation.

In order that my proposal should have some prospect of being accepted by Germany I had, of course, to include, as an essential principle, that the surrender to the new Polish state of any Polish territory which at the time formed an essential part of Germany or Austria-Hungary was out of the question. This involved the most vital departure from my earlier programme, which had contemplated the union of Poland with Galicia, within the framework of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. This step was, at the time, the lesser of two evils, and had to be taken, since Germany now definitely refused the Austro-Polish solution, and without Germany we could not effect any solution at all.

The Poles might find partial comfort for their disappointed hopes of union in the fact that an independent kingdom would offer them a further security for their national development; and in the fact that my proposal avoided mentioning that Poland should be under the protection of Germany.

It seemed to me desirable in the obvious interests of the Central Powers that the Polish state should be assured of a real and comprehensive independence and that it should be subject to absolutely as few limitations as possible, consistent with the peace and security of the new state and its position as an ally of the Central Powers. These limitations were to be the subject of special agreements between Austria-Hungary and Germany, and of treaties to be concluded with Poland herself. It was a cardinal principle of the proposal that the Central Powers should be on a footing of absolute equality in all the questions involved. Having regard to her equal rights, her vital interests, and her prestige both in Poland and in Galicia, it was impossible for the monarchy to recede from this position.

The military agreements necessary were to be concluded in a military convention of three.

The due adhesion of the new kingdom to the alliance of the two Central Powers must be provided for, in order to assure that the foreign policy of Poland should harmonise with theirs.

Commercially Poland would need the protection of a tariff against more developed states, if the struggling young industries of the country were to survive.

Poland must therefore form an independent customs limit, with preferential tariffs if necessary for her commerce with Austria-Hungary and Germany.

Apart from these special rights of the Central Powers arising out of the nature of the case, the sovereignty of the King of Poland was to be complete and unrestricted. Internal policy and the administration of the kingdom were to be made entirely independent of any external interference.

Such were the main outlines of my counter-proposal to the Chancellor, which followed the main lines of his own, with the additions and modifications necessary to give expression to our parallel rights.

I constantly and persistently urged that a solution of the Polish problem should be arrived at as speedily as possible, at any rate as between the liberating Powers, in order that our policy might as soon as possible be uniform in regard to the Poles, and we might thus be enabled more easily to counteract any hostile activities amongst them.

There were two considerations especially which urged haste and had a strong influence upon the intentions of Germany. One was the rumour spread abroad that Russia proposed to issue a proclamation to the Poles containing extensive promises of the union of all persons of Polish nationality and of national independence, promises which would have been irresistible but for

Poland's inveterate scepticism regarding Russia's sincerity. The other was the idea specially favoured by Germany, of creating a Polish army, which would be impracticable so long as the country lacked the outlines of a constitution. Poland had been liberated. It was but just and right that she should exert her own strength in the protection of her freedom; whether she would show much enthusiasm for taking part in the war as long as its issue was in doubt, was open to question.

Soon afterwards, on the 11th August, the Chancellor visited Vienna.

The conversations were conducted with him and with von Jagow, the Secretary of State, who was with him, on the basis of my counter-proposal, and resulted in agreement regarding the creation of an independent kingdom of Poland with an hereditary constitutional monarch. A proclamation to this effect should as soon as possible be issued on behalf of the two allied monarchies, but the constitution of the new state should be deferred to the end of the war. Up to that time the conduct of the war made it necessary that Poland should continue to be under military control, but the limitations on trade and intercourse with similar territory in Austria-Hungary and Germany were to be reduced as far as possible.

The decision regarding the precise boundaries of the new state, which was principally to consist of Congress Poland, was not yet taken, but it was stipulated that no portion of the territories of the Central Powers should fall to Poland.

The internal administration of the new state was left to Poland. With regard to external affairs, we proposed to bind Poland to the alliance of the Central Powers by a treaty.

Commercially, the Chancellor advocated the necessity of incorporating the Polish state with the German

customs system, not merely out of regard for German requirements, but for vital economic requirements of the Polish state.

In reply to this proposal I submitted that both the Central Powers had the same economic rights in Poland, whereas a customs union with Germany would be prejudicial to Austro-Hungarian economic interests apart from other objections, and that a Polish customs territory should be created. I maintained this position, and it was agreed that the question of the practical working of the various customs systems should first be examined by experts. The early dispatch of them to Berlin was contemplated.

I had to reconcile myself to concessions to the German wishes in two directions which did not coincide with my fundamental principles. But we were very much dependent upon Germany's military support. We had only just recovered, with German assistance, from the disaster of Luck ; Italy was attacking hard on the Isonzo front ; the breach with Rumania, which would increase our dependence upon German assistance, was imminent. It would have been madness at such a moment to have failed to show an accommodating spirit.

The Chancellor declared that certain transfers of Russo-Polish territory would be essential to establish the military security of Germany's eastern frontier, but promised that they should be limited to what was absolutely essential from the military point of view. The province of Suvalki, which wedges itself into the German frontier in the north, was not to belong to the new kingdom.

I raised no objection, and reserved the right to effect such corresponding adjustments of the frontier as Austria-Hungary might consider necessary from the military point of view.

I repeated my wish that the territories of Lithuania

with a predominating Polish population, especially the town of Vilna, should be allotted to the state of Poland. We should endeavour in our peace terms with Russia to effect the extension of the Polish kingdom as far as possible to the east, where the Polish population predominated.

It was decided that steps should immediately be taken for creating a separate Polish army. A mixed military commission should work out any necessary agreement regarding its organisation. The military convention between Poland and each of the Central Powers should then be concluded.

I expressed my agreement that unity of command should be established and should be exercised by Germany. This was a considerable concession. I made it with the full consciousness of its significance, and after careful consideration of all its possible results. It was a counsel of necessity; everything pointed to the fact that military considerations required that the organisation of the army should be uniform if success were to be speedily achieved. That being so, there could be no question, in view of the general situation, that Germany should have the chief command. It was the business of the commissions to secure Austria-Hungary her share in the organisation, and to see that the Polish element obtained an increasing share of responsibility.

General agreement was arrived at; but putting it into practice proved exceedingly difficult. This was not unnatural, seeing that the agreement had entailed for both sides no inconsiderable *sacrificium intellectus*. Points of view which had to be suppressed were not eliminated, and the actual conditions on which they were based strove to produce their logical conclusions.

First, there were the Poles of Galicia. However confidentially negotiations may be conducted, those who are principally concerned always learn something about

them. Great disappointment was felt throughout Galicia when it became known that there was no immediate prospect of union with Poland. It occasioned no inconsiderable embarrassment to local politicians. The more acute amongst them realised the necessity of taking steps to prevent an irredentist movement, and began to think of the means of introducing extensive reforms in Galicia. This was the immediate concern of the Austrian government.

Germany again seemed to wish to take her time in Polish questions. But behind this superficial activity internal conflicts were at work, as was soon to appear. During September Austria-Hungary was not an active factor, as she was fully occupied in warding off the Rumanian peril.

After our agreement, the most urgent matter appeared to be the issue of the proclamation regarding the independence of Poland. This could do no harm from the military point of view, and might be useful politically. In any case it would make it possible to start training Polish troops, a matter of great concern to Germany. But still no progress was made in the matter of the proclamation, and Germany even seemed to have misgivings as to its possible effect outside, on friend and foe ; and yet the drafting of the proclamation made it possible for us to secure practically the effect we desired, provided that we did not introduce limitations making the independence promised quite meaningless.

But about the beginning of October, under the influence of military requirements, Berlin started a new tack. She requested us to give up the Governor-Generalship of Lublin, and that a joint administration of the country should be set up under German direction so that the organisation of the new Polish army on a permanent basis should be assured. Political control was also claimed by Germany.

The far from frivolous considerations underlying Germany's plain and straightforward wishes regarding Poland were readily intelligible, but to yield to them appeared impossible both from the Austro-Hungarian and from the general point of view. We could not depart from the basis of our August counter-proposals, which were so favourable to Germany. We could depart from our earlier programme if the "Austro-Polish" solution were superseded by Poland's independence under the equal patronage of the two liberators. But Austria-Hungary could not allow herself to be brushed aside. It was inconceivable that the monarchy should remain unrelated to Poland, and it was certainly not in the joint interests of our alliance that this should be so. With all their respect for her great achievements, the Poles were not in the least drawn to Germany, and had not the least desire to be governed by them. Under German rule Poland would have been difficult to handle, Galicia almost ungovernable. Both Germany and Austria-Hungary would have been far from attaining their object of establishing peace and security on their eastern frontiers. Reasons of military necessity were not sufficiently urgent to warrant the complete disregard of political considerations, and in the light of subsequent events it is at least open to question whether there was a better prospect of rapidly creating a Polish army under exclusively German direction, or with the joint assistance of Austria-Hungary and Poland.

It was politically impossible and would have been quite pointless for Austria-Hungary to give up the Governor-Generalship of Lublin before Germany gave up Warsaw. The provisional dual administration in Poland certainly had its drawbacks, but it arose naturally in the course of the war, illustrated the relation of the two Powers to the country, and was certainly better than a condominium. The unification of the adminis-

tration of Poland was an object which I too sought to achieve, though I wished speedily to set about it in another way which I soon had the opportunity of submitting to the quarters concerned.

In their Polish policy during the war Austria-Hungary and Germany were often at variance in considering means, as was natural in view of the different way in which the problem affected the two countries; but they were in agreement as to the principal object, which was to place the future relations of Poland to our group of Powers on the basis calculated to promote the peaceful development of the three states. Hence every difficulty that arose must and could be bridged over. The proved way to achieve this was by verbal discussion. I could not fall in with Germany's latest plans regarding Poland. I therefore fixed on the 18th October for a meeting with the Chancellor in the German Headquarters at Pless, which was attended by Generals von Hindenburg, Ludendorff, Baron Conrad, and Governor-General von Beseler, as well as by Bethmann-Hollweg and von Jagow. Accompanying me was the ambassador, von Mérey.

The discussions at Pless went into the matter very fully, and were strongly coloured by the military element, as was indicated by the imposing collection of military dignitaries. I felt it to be my duty not to allow the military side to predominate and to squeeze political considerations into the shade. By way of introduction the Chancellor indicated that the process of the organisation of a Polish militia and the question of the consequent unification in German hands of the two administrative districts in Russian Poland would be the subject of the negotiations. The discussion was conducted by the German generals with considerable emphasis, and culminated in the thesis that, since the high command of the Polish army fell to Germany, the

preparation and creation of it too could be the proper task only of Germany. But the unification of the administration in the two areas was an essential condition of the unification of military control. According to this view, it would be distinctly harmful if all the principal measures were taken from two distinct points of view, in a different spirit and according to different methods. But since the intervention and co-operation of the civil departments was necessary, it was not admissible that these either should be different in character.

For getting troops the system of voluntary recruiting was proposed at first.

Questions of military policy were dealt with by Governor-General von Beseler, whereas General Ludendorff energetically represented the point of view of the pure soldier, to which indeed, in his view, all others had to give way, political situations being subordinate to military requirements.

Field-Marshal von Hindenburg confined himself to commending the German point of view to our agreement in a few telling words, deeply inspired by the friendliest feelings for the Austro-Hungarian monarchy.

The debate was characterised by the German assurances that they did not wish to interfere with our interests in Poland. But their view of these interests and of the political side of the whole matter seemed somewhat affected by the pronounced tendency to consider it pre-eminently from the point of view of the military specialist.

It proved to be necessary for me to intervene with emphasis to elucidate certain points. I did so not without success. The necessary tasks waiting for us in Russian Poland were the creation of the Polish state and of the Polish militia. To consider the latter before the former did not appear desirable. It was not merely a question as to whether the Poles would have had any enthusiasm

in joining in the war, if their country was merely occupied territory. We also had to consider their fear that if captured by the Russians they might be treated, not as combatants, but as rebels and *franc-tireurs*. It was therefore necessary to create in advance at least a virtual guarantee that a Polish state would be set up, and the publication of the contemplated proclamation was therefore urgent and necessary, as I had already indicated in August. Without such a proclamation there was no prospect of recruiting men with success, by voluntary means or otherwise. The mere attempt would arouse mistrust amongst the Poles.

At the same time I indicated that it would be unnecessary and inexpedient to follow up the proclamation, immediately and with nervous haste, with a recruiting campaign. It would not do to encourage the belief that the Central Powers were so weak that they created the kingdom of Poland only in order to obtain a Polish army. Any Poles who got this impression would draw from it the further conclusion that it would be dangerous for them to fight on the side of people who did not trust in their own strength. The national consciousness of the Poles had been strengthened; a few weeks after the proclamation, when it had had time to influence public sentiment, would be the right moment to proceed to raise an army.

For reasons which had lost none of their cogency we had contemplated in our August agreement leaving the two Governor-Generalships until the effective creation of the Polish state. Armed with the same powers and acting upon similar principles, they could proceed to prepare for raising the militia, without prejudice to Germany taking over the supreme command of the army at a later date. We were far from wishing to create opportunities for friction in raising the army. On quite identical principles and methods we would work for

the same object, security from the north-east. This object was as important for Austria-Hungary as for Germany, and the proclamation should therefore be made as soon as possible, so that the joint military commission too should be able to start to work at the earliest possible date.

Speaking as a military specialist, General von Conrad confirmed the view that the Polish army could be created even without carrying to its logical conclusion the uniformity of method desired by the Germans, through the effective co-operation of the two Powers. The important thing was that the Poles should not get the impression that they had been entirely given up by Austria-Hungary and handed over to Germany. But in any case, without a Polish state there would be no Polish army. All the interests represented in this meeting were agreed not actually to set up a fully constituted Polish state during the war, but only to give the Poles a binding promise. But in order to be able to make a start with the creation of a Polish army I recommended that a Polish national council, or any other similar body representing the nation, should previously be appointed. For the present and until the Polish administration was installed, this body was to have no executive powers; the Governor-Generalships should continue to function, and even if a regent were placed at the head of this Polish body, his position would at first be a purely honorary one and he would have no functions to perform.

These suggestions and even the idea of an advisory assembly of notables were not turned down by the Germans. But as they still adhered to their wish to amalgamate Lublin and Warsaw, it was necessary to seek a compromise.

It was clear that for political reasons the establishment of a uniform administration for the whole of Poland must be undertaken. This was a fundamental necessity

for the practicable organisation of the future independent state. But for this very reason uniformity should be developed on Polish, and not on German lines, and I was convinced that it would have been a mistake in this matter to have sacrificed what was politically essential to a doubtful military convenience.

Moreover, the amalgamation of Lublin and Warsaw would scarcely have achieved for the military the object they had in view, as it was only reasonable to expect that a Poland in the constitution of whose national and united administration Austria-Hungary had had a share would show greater willingness to provide an army than a Poland that was exclusively in German hands.

When we had exchanged ideas on this subject, and proceeded to consider a proposal of Governor-General von Beseler to discuss a means for effecting a union of the two administrations, with an Austro-Hungarian delegation to be sent to Warsaw, and after a little time to dismiss the two Governors-General and appoint a single chief who he thought should be German, I developed the idea that we should forthwith begin in both administrative territories to see that the organisation and the laws were as homogeneous and similar as possible, and to bring existing institutions into line by the selection of those which had proved themselves the most suitable, and that a uniform administrative system could easily be set up, which could be transferred later to the new Polish state. To this end I intimated that I should welcome any proposal which would conduce to the similarity of method in the two administrative districts, and to the co-operation of the Austro-Hungarian and German governments. In this sense I also said that I was ready, in accordance with General von Beseler's suggestion, to send an Austro-Hungarian delegation to Warsaw on a consultative mission.

I said that what I must avoid for political reasons was the supersession of our administration by a German one. As soon as an independent Poland had been set up, both administrative domains would automatically and simultaneously merge in the new Polish state.

As to the necessity of subordinating considerations of policy and prestige to military considerations, I could accept this postulate only subject to an essential limitation, in view of the considerable political interests of the monarchy. Military exigencies too, especially when they were advanced by one side only, must be weighed against any pertinent political objections.

On this subject General Ludendorff says in his memoirs: "In the interests of the creation of the Polish army I opposed Count Burián and strongly supported the unification. The leading statesmen came to no agreement. The wishes of the dual monarchy and his concern regarding internal difficulties counted for more with Count Burián than the interests of our joint campaign. The unification of the two Governor-Generalships advocated by the German High Command, Ludendorff and General Beseler, came to nothing."

General Ludendorff did certainly very strongly press the purely military considerations in what was principally a political question, and he cannot be reproached for that. I, however, championed the opposite point of view in the conviction that if I failed to carry out the wishes of the dual monarchy and forgot my concern regarding internal affairs I should seriously jeopardise the interests of our joint campaign, since we should have had behind our front a people deceived in its hopes and which felt that it had come under a new and hated foreign yoke. It is not true, as General Ludendorff states later on, that "the High Command was unwillingly and unfairly dragged into the Polish wrangle in autumn

1916." The reverse was the case. The attempt was made to decide the political question of Poland by purely military standards.

The conference of Pless agreed on the following points :

The mixed military commission should meet at Warsaw on the 23rd October and complete its work as speedily as possible.

As soon as this had been done, both Powers were to issue a proclamation to the Polish people in identical terms.

The organisation of the Polish army, which was primarily conceived as being voluntary, should be entrusted to the German High Command, with the assistance of Austro-Hungarian officers and non-commissioned officers in the territory under German administration, and of German officers and N.C.O.s in the territory under Austro-Hungarian administration.

The Imperial and Royal military General-Governorship of Lublin should be maintained for the administration of our territory. But a delegation of Austro-Hungarian officials should be despatched to Warsaw to consult on the manner in which the two administrative methods could be transformed and brought into closer relationship with one another, in order that the greatest possible similarity in the administration of the two parts should be attained—in anticipation of the establishment of the independent State of Poland.

Now the road was cleared for Poland's resurrection. The formalities still necessary were completed in a short time. A deputation of notables from Warsaw, the chief of whom was the university professor Dr. Brudzinski, president of the district council, arrived in Berlin on the 28th October and in Vienna on the 30th of the month, in order to establish agreement

regarding the contemplated action and to convey the wishes of the Poles.

On the 5th November appeared the proclamation of the two governor-generalships. It was issued in the name of the allied monarchs, and announced the foundation of the independent kingdom of Poland from the liberated territories as an hereditary constitutional kingdom. This act did not satisfy all hopes and did not solve all difficulties. But it established a fact which could not henceforth be ignored. The return of Poland to Russia was thereby made as impossible as her annexation by the Central Powers, and even the Entente, who gave out they were fighting for the freedom of peoples, would have to accept the event, although their comments might be far from friendly.

The 5th November was the birthday of the new Poland. From the first moment she showed the capacity and the will to live, although she still had many vicissitudes to meet in her development. I had but little opportunity to keep pace with these, as I was soon to retire from office, before it was possible to get Polish affairs further under way in accordance with our agreements with Germany. The recruiting campaign was launched by the military, against my advice, soon after the proclamation, the effect of which was thereby somewhat damaged, as was to be foreseen. The news from Warsaw left no doubt on this point.

It had now become urgent gradually to put into effect the temporary solution arrived at in the Polish question. It could be delayed, but could not be removed from the agenda. The problem grew in the hands of the Powers that had to handle it.

CHAPTER V

AMERICA

FROM the first days of the war the United States of North America suggested an imposing, somewhat mysterious power of fate on the political horizon. The most powerful of the neutral states, the U.S.A., might justly feel that she was called upon to give the lead to others, a rôle for which the philosophical bent and remarkable personality of her president peculiarly fitted her. The number of the neutrals diminished as the war went on, but their functions became none the less important. They were the only peaceful islands in the midst of a world seething in wild conflicts; they provided the last possibilities of contact between the two great hostile camps into which humanity was divided; they were a refuge for such timid thoughts of peace as might arise amongst the warring peoples.

As long as America was amongst the neutrals, their group carried much more weight. It constituted the hope of those amongst friend and foe who in the clash of war had not ceased to long for the end of the ghastly conflict of the nations, all the more so as President Wilson clearly revealed his ambition to assist in restoring peace to the world by his mediation. And who would not have welcomed a mediator who commanded such power and authority. But the American riddle, which even to-day is not finally solved, began at the very start of the war.

The most correct neutrality cannot eliminate sentiment, and it was not altogether surprising that, since the approach of the war menace, all the sympathies of the United States should have been on the side of the Entente. The Anglo-Saxon blood was telling, for it was England's war. Traditional friendship for France and displeasure with Germany did the rest. Such accidental causes of the war as the quarrel between

Austria-Hungary and Serbia met with little interest and understanding in America. But the great causes of the world conflict found America morally altogether in our enemies' camp, although sentiment in the United States could not in the least be counted among the forces leading to the outbreak. America provided a field much more receptive of the exceptionally active war propaganda of our enemies, especially of England, being almost monopolised in this respect, thanks to geographical conditions, with the result that the Central Powers were at an increasing disadvantage in presenting their case to the American public. This was best proved by the small effect produced on those occasions when we made a sincere attempt to secure understanding for our position.

Nevertheless there was scope and occasion enough for Wilson to play the part of mediator he so much desired, for the war had spread to monstrous dimensions, and after the first phase of it had proved indecisive, it came more and more to have the character of an indefinitely prolonged struggle, the issue of which was doubtful. Was that not sufficient occasion for Wilson to pave the way to an understanding, the essential terms of which he, holding the scales as he did, could almost dictate and was it not occasion for the two contending groups to have recourse to his good offices in order to examine whether it was yet possible to attain peace on the road of moderation and compromise between the essential war aims of the two sides ?

America's partiality for the Entente would not have prevented us from accepting and from welcoming mediation by the United States at the appropriate moment. Sympathy for the one side did not necessarily imply the lack of a desire to do justice to the other. About the end of the first year of the war America must have felt that the two halves of Europe were about equally

balanced, and that the enormous efforts and sacrifices made by both sides called for a serious and impartial examination of the case for each of them.

A certain aversion felt by the Central Powers from inviting American mediation was occasioned by the fact that from the beginning of the war the United States had practised the duties of neutrality in a manner which did not appear to us to be quite in harmony with the spirit of international law and tradition, while the increasing scale on which our enemies were unfairly favoured aroused our growing resentment.

The export of military material of every kind from the United States to enemy countries began with the outbreak of war, and assumed greater dimensions from day to day. By about the middle of May 1915, according to American statistics, about 1,000,000,000 dollars' worth of war material had been exported. It is obvious that in a war which occasioned the greatest accumulations of men and material the world has ever seen, the result might be decisively influenced by such an inexhaustible source of supply being available for one side and closed to the other.

The international rules regarding the right of neutrals to deliver arms and munitions to the combatants had never been quite clear. They were not even made so by Article VII of the Hague Convention (18th October 1907). This Convention covers many cases, but only those where, as has generally been the case in history, one or two states have been at war in the midst of a neutral world, but not the unprecedented event of a world conflict in which nearly all countries were involved, only one great Power, a Power of boundless resources, remaining outside. In other wars the combatants were able to obtain supplies from different sources, or one neutral state could conduct the same trade with both sides. In the world war only the United States were

in question, and they allowed themselves to be completely cut off from the Central Powers by the Blockade.

The Central Powers suffered exceptionally under these conditions, the German western front especially being overwhelmed with American munitions in the bombardments from the beginning of 1915. As early as the middle of February Germany raised her voice in protest against this export of munitions, in a Note to Washington, but without any result. This was not surprising seeing that a great commercial interest and international political conditions both tended in the same direction. The Trust of the manufacturers of war material was powerful, and the Federal government would not perhaps, even with the best intentions, have been able to oppose it with success.

Nevertheless, in view of the great interests at stake for the monarchy, and of my own responsibility, I felt that I was called upon to make a serious attempt to vindicate our rights, especially as I could adduce further considerations in support of the arguments used by the German government. Our voice must be heard, lest continued silence should suggest that Austria-Hungary admitted the attitude taken up by the American government in this matter to be just.

The Note which I addressed in this sense on the 29th June 1915 to the Washington cabinet is contained in the Appendix, together with the subsequent correspondence. The object of it was to show that the attitude taken up by the United States in the question of the export of war material amounted to a one-sided favouring of one set of combatants, which was difficult to reconcile with the duties of neutrality. Even if the Hague Convention in a general way confers upon neutral governments the right to permit their subjects to export contraband of war, this is limited by the general duty of strict impartiality towards the parties at war. Now,

the United States were in the position of being able to deliver war material to the Entente, but not to the Central Powers, as the result of the trade prohibition, which indeed was very easily accepted by America. This put the United States under a natural obligation absolutely to forbid the export of any commodities which, in the position created by the Entente and accepted gratuitously by the States, could reach only one of the combatant parties. The Hague Convention gave them the undoubted right to do so, but it was a right the exercise or neglect of which, without regard to the probable effects upon the country's relations with the combatants, could not possibly be left to the mere discretion of the neutral government. It was also an absolute condition of any such regulation that the neutral state should apply it indifferently to both the combatant parties, that is, forbid the export to either or make it possible to both.

The delegates at the Hague, moreover, were not able to regulate in detail all difficult cases which might arise for neutrals, or even approximately to exhaust the definitions of the nature of neutral in the fragmentary provisions of the relevant agreements. All they could do was clearly to express the view in a few sentences, that the fundamental basis of neutrality consisted in the equal treatment of all combatants. Now, it is scarcely possible to imagine a case where the duty of a neutral government to take steps against the export of contraband of war was more clear and obvious than here. Never in the course of history has any party in a war been so favoured by a neutral state to the detriment of another.

More reprehensible than anything else was the American government's refusal to take the necessary steps to prevent the Central Powers from continuing to be shut off from legitimate trade with the neutrals in defiance

of international law. In view of this fact the American government had no right to claim, as she did, that she was prepared in principle to deliver war materials to Austria-Hungary and Germany too, and that it was therefore not her fault that only one set of combatants could benefit by this export.

This point of view was clearly and exhaustively set out in my Note appealing to the Federal government carefully to review the attitude which they had hitherto adopted in this important question. If the American government found they could not accept my interpretation of the legal position and continued to refuse to take the necessary steps against the export of war material, I would apply, in accordance with the arbitration convention concluded between Austria-Hungary and the United States in 1909, to have the legal question in dispute submitted to the decision of a court of arbitration as speedily as possible.

America's skilfully drafted reply of the 16th August 1915 sidetracked the question by debating against my alleged assertion of an obligation "to change or modify the rules of international usage on account of special conditions, and also "that the advantages gained to a belligerent by its superiority on the sea should be equalised by the neutral Powers by the establishment of a system of non-intercourse with the victor." It cited against Austria-Hungary and Germany instances from previous wars, especially from the Boer war, the Crimean war, the Turko-Italian war, and the Balkan wars, when we were alleged to have supplied the combatants with weapons and war material. The Note next proceeds to elaborate the argument, so soon to be refuted in practice on America's entry into the war, that in the event of a war the United States themselves, possessing no military force or large stocks of weapons and ammunition, would be compelled to obtain the munitions of war elsewhere.

In a word, our theory would, in the American view, force the hated militarism on the whole world.

The further arguments of the Note were directed against individual points in our interpretation of what had hitherto been the practice in questions of neutrality. My reply to the American contention is contained in my answering Note of 24th September 1915.

In this I avoided going into the question whether America was prevented from doing anything against the export of war material, because she might, if circumstances arose, require to import such material. That might furnish practical grounds for her action ; it did not affect the legal position of neutral countries, which was the point at issue. I was reluctant to burden the discussion by pointing out the curious conclusions to which America's scruples must lead. However, to indicate them here is perhaps not without interest for understanding the American train of thought. If Powers who run the risk of becoming involved in a war neglect to provide themselves with the means of resistance, and then when war is declared, as the Note puts it, " go into the markets of the world and purchase the means to defend itself against the aggressor," this implies the existence of a group of Powers less exposed to danger of war themselves, who nevertheless establish war industries in order to supply those who go to war. You would then have the edifying spectacle of two kinds of states : those who make war, and those to whom other peoples' wars are a welcome business opportunity. Powers whose policy exposes them to the risk of attack would be relieved of the necessity of maintaining their military equipment in peace time. That would be militarism. But it is assumed as a matter of course that individual states should support war industries for foreign requirements.

The object of my answering Note on the 24th September was to show that American neutrality, even

if formally brought into line with what was 'admissible according to international law, pressed heavily upon the Central Powers, since the spirit of true impartiality was obscured by the practical workings of the system.

I had been far from striving to secure that neutral America should to a certain extent equalise the chances of the two sides by prohibiting the export of arms. Our view was rather that the excessive export of war material would not have been permissible even if it had been destined for the countries of both sides. I merely protested against the economic life of the United States being devoted to the production and export of war material on a huge scale, through the creation of new factories and the extension and conversion of existing ones.

Thereby, though perhaps not deliberately, effective assistance was actually rendered to one of the combatants. The comparisons adduced with other wars failed, because in the cases mentioned the combatants were able to supply themselves with war material from many different countries. In the world war the United States was the only Power who really counted for deliveries on such a scale. This is what gave the export of war material from the United States its special significance and its distinctive character.

If the Federal government had taken up the standpoint that it was impossible for the United States to trade with the Central Powers on account of the military position, it was in their power to make it possible. It was not the maritime successes of England and her allies that caused legitimate trade between America and the Central Powers entirely to cease, but the measures taken by the Entente Powers which were contrary to international law, and which the United States government too regarded as illegitimate.

The exchange of Notes on the neutrality question did not in any way alter the situation. American war material played a very great part in European theatres of war until finally the American armies came over and decided the war against us. It may therefore to-day seem otiose to spend time in describing the shades of a neutrality which was destined to pass into open hostility. But the very fact that it did so proves how right we were in feeling the basis of hostility underlying American neutrality. This attitude of mind, which never gave the benefit of extenuating circumstances to the Central Powers, especially Germany, and always indulged in the severest criticism, necessitated the most cautious handling of our relations with the United States, in order to avoid such dangerous situations as might arise from various incidents, and finally occurred in connection with the U-boats.

The world conflict which we have experienced is not without important and suggestive material for the development of the controversial questions of neutrality in war time, for never have the rights and duties of neutrals been the subject of so much controversy and opportunist interpretation as in the last war.

A period of complete peace is the only favourable time for the development of the international law of neutrals. The assurance of peace has more than ever become for humanity partly a matter of fundamental concern and partly the object of lip service. The League of Nations certainly does not exclude the possibility of future wars, but even in its present rudimentary form it will automatically constitute a league of neutrals and exert a restrictive influence upon the extension of military law, that is, it will work in the direction of securing the effective and impartial isolation of the combatants, and extensive protection coupled with careful control of the neutrals.

CHAPTER VI

ALLIED DIPLOMACY IN THE WAR

IN the course of my account of Italian, Rumanian, Polish, and American affairs, I have indicated the continuous reactions exercised upon each other by the direction of our and of the German foreign policies. The essential thing was to secure fundamental unity of aim in all important political questions connected with the war which affected the two Allies jointly, especially where identity of opinion and interest were not a previous condition, and a certain amount of give and take was necessary. This provided the touchstone of the Austro-Hungarian-German alliance policy in the war. Though the final collapse may have robbed it of any results, yet it successfully survived the test of working together. All that is past and lost, but in history everything continues to operate in its effects, and one is better reconciled to misfortunes if one knows that one has left nothing undone that could have averted disaster.

In the thirty-five years of its existence during peace, the Austro-Hungarian-German alliance had its settled ceremonial, I might almost say its liturgy. It had come to form an essential part of the Austro-Hungarian way and also of the German way of thinking, it practically constituted the "iron ration" of our political equipment. Like something taken for granted, like the air one breathes, we scarcely noticed it. It gave a feeling of comfortable security, was no trouble, and at stated intervals we used to pay it traditional homage.

At the same time, the feeling of the general public for the alliance was, with the possible exception of pan-German elements in Austria-Hungary, free from any extravagance. It was just felt to be a useful and convenient arrangement expressing the sentiment of the vast majority, which is probably the highest praise possible for any political combination. The alliance permitted of complete freedom of action in internal

and external affairs, and did not even exclude the possibility of keen competition between the allies. It only excluded commitments which were irreconcilable with its avowed aims.

In view of the nationalities constituting the monarchy, the feeling for the alliance in Austria-Hungary had to be confined within the bounds of prudent appreciation. Some sections of the population even expressly repudiated it, but their opposition brought out the fact that the overwhelming majority of people in Austria-Hungary capable of political thought were convinced supporters of the treaty, and that was quite sufficient to secure it. If the alliance was discussed in the monarchy frequently and from the most various points of view, this had not been unforeseen by its founders, who had not lost sight of the fact that an alliance can survive only as long as the conditions obtain which brought it into being.

Count Andr ssy had always been fully conscious of the varied nature of the voices behind him, which might produce either a harmony or a cacophony. As for Prince Bismarck, perhaps I may quote once again the classical passages in his Memoirs which express the essential mental reservation, subject to which he decided upon the alliance with Austria-Hungary :

“ Even in the last century it was perilous to reckon on the constraining force of the text of a treaty of alliance when the conditions under which it had been written were changed ; to-day it is hardly possible for the government of a great Power to place its resources unreservedly at the disposal of a friendly state when the sentiment of the people disapproves it. No longer, therefore, does the text of a treaty afford the same securities as in the days of the ‘ cabinet wars ’ which were waged with armies of from 20,000 to 60,000 men ” ; and later on : “ All contracts between great states cease to be unconditionally binding as soon as they are

tested by the 'struggle for existence.' No great nation will ever be induced to sacrifice its existence on the altar of fidelity to contract when it is compelled to choose between the two. The maxim '*ultra posse nemo obligatur*' holds good in spite of all treaty formulas whatsoever, nor can any treaty guarantee the degree of zeal and the amount of force that will be devoted to the discharge of obligations when the private interest of those who lie under them no longer reinforces the text and its earliest interpretation. If, then, changes were to occur in the political situation of Europe of such a kind as to make an anti-German policy appear *salus publica* for Austria-Hungary, public faith could no more be expected to induce her to make an act of self-sacrifice than we saw gratitude do during the Crimean war, though the obligation was perhaps stronger than any that can be established by the wax and parchment of a treaty."

Prince Bismarck sums up his ideas in the following sentence: "I think, therefore, that to ensure the durability of a written treaty it is indispensable that the variable element of political interest, and the perils involved therein, should not be left out of account."

For the first time then since it came into existence, having protected its members, which had been increased to three by the accession of Italy, from every attack for many years, the alliance, which had been built up upon the basis of a joint guarantee of which the members were keenly aware, was to prove its capacity to continue through the war if this basis still existed.

The Triple Alliance was a purely defensive league which was able for a great number of years to achieve its objects by peaceful means through its mere existence. Internal disintegration and attacks from outside brought it to its crisis. It was certainly not untrue to its nature in decisively resisting an attack. A political community

does not only feel itself to be attacked when hostile armies advance against its frontiers. When the heavy clouds of the Balkan wars rolled up, and the charged atmosphere which they left behind them filled the world with uneasiness, public opinion in Austria-Hungary and Germany already had a very clear sense of the immediate danger which the new developments contained for them. Germany saw how her political encirclement was being completed, and Austria-Hungary felt her existence threatened by the more and more undisguised greed of hostile neighbours for her territory.

Italy certainly stood quite aside in her feelings. She had no share in the worries of her allies. On the contrary, the idea had emerged with amazing rapidity that the difficulties of her allies might be Italy's opportunity.

It was therefore quite in accordance with national psychology and the essential facts of the case that Germany should have given full effect to her alliance with us in the war, without hesitation and without bargaining, and that Italy should immediately find that the alliance was not involved and declare herself neutral, in order at the right moment to strike her allies in the back.

The partnership in the war of our German ally was, as might have been expected, vigorous, unlimited, loyal, and helpful. I shall not expatiate upon it. It is written in iron letters upon every page of the history of this war. That frictions, misunderstandings, differences of opinion as to strategy, even recriminations, should not have been entirely lacking, especially as long as the unity of the fronts and the organic combination of the high commands had not been carried through, cannot occasion surprise and has been the same in every joint campaign. But the outstanding factor was the feeling of solidarity in the objects of the war, and mutual devotion and capacity for sacrifice. In war, policy

goes hand in hand with military action, to which it gives purpose and significance. The policy of the allies in the war had therefore to go hand in hand with their undertakings in the field. But this is the most difficult and complicated element in the relations between allies.

In a war conducted by allies, military action is determined by the exigencies of the moment, bearing in the mind the immediate object of conquering the enemy. What is useful to one ally is also of service to the other. Errors and omissions of the one immediately affect the other. Every military success or failure has to be put down to the joint account, and the significance of actions in the field is fully realised in the course of the war and in its final result.

It is not so with policy in war. The war aims of an alliance may be fundamentally identical, but they must seek to accommodate themselves to the special interests of the allies. A policy which may be advantageous to one party is not necessarily so to the other. Neither internal nor external policy in war therefore may be guided merely by its own requirements. It may not close its eyes to the reactions upon the interests of its ally. A battle won is always an advantage to all the allies. The most successful political combination may, if effected without regard for an ally, seriously damage him.

But what especially distinguishes political solidarity in a war from mere comradeship in arms, is the extensive influence of the former upon the future for which one is fighting and working. It is a commonplace that joint military action in an alliance attains its greatest value when steps have been taken to assure that the success achieved shall be exploited in the essential interests of both parties by the elaboration of sound measures promising permanence.

In bearing witness to the loyalty of Germany's policy in the alliance during my period of office, I am not allowing my judgment to be influenced by incidental disagreements, or by the oppressive fact of the final failure of our joint endeavours.

In the superhuman struggle into which they were drawn, Austria-Hungary and Germany had the same aim, successfully to resist the attack, and to maintain intact their territorial and economic possessions.

Now that the great conflict has been decided by the collapse of one party, and by cruel, unwise, dictated peace treaties, when, moreover, Austria-Hungary no longer exists at all, one's object is not to convert our enemies of yesterday, or anybody else, and to anticipate the impartial verdict of posterity; one merely wishes to record the facts as our side in good faith saw them.

We conducted a war of defence against a combined onslaught which had been prepared for a number of years against the existence of Austria-Hungary, and against Germany's position as a world power. The conviction that this was so had so permeated the peoples of both empires that it was shared even by our adversaries at home, though the war which inspired our loyal population to determined resistance was their opportunity.

Thus the political unity of front was achieved, upon which the allied Powers were concerned to demonstrate, by seizing the opportunity that offered, that they were at any moment prepared to replace in the scabbard the sword which had been unwillingly drawn, only in self-defence, if only the others would cease to threaten their most vital interests—nay, their very existence.

While the Chancellor and I were in complete agreement, constantly holding ourselves ready to negotiate, and our joint policies were united in their endeavours to find a way out of the tumult of war through friendly

sentiments, all the signs from the enemy camp were indicative of hatred and the desire to exterminate.

Though in its essential aims the harmony between Austria-Hungary's policy in the war, and that of Germany, was absolute, nothing could be more natural than that opinions as to ways and means should often diverge. At one time Austria-Hungary's and at another Germany's interests would be principally at stake. Then sacrifices would have to be considered or a compromise thought out. It was frequently necessary first to awaken understanding for the position of the other party. If points of view were sometimes different, temperaments were no less so. If policy could justly consider itself as being the determining factor of the war, the army commands also intervened with demands and assumptions of a political kind, which they advanced as being indispensable on military grounds. It has never been possible to draw a sharp line between the political and military spheres of responsibility in war time. Though the army be merely the instrument for carrying out the intentions and policy of the state, it becomes the most important factor when the fate of the whole is entrusted to its protection. This leads inevitably to divergences between the military and the political leaders.

In this war, too, the army command and the political chiefs were not always on the best of terms, and there were times when the military took up a definite offensive against diplomacy, adopting Blücher's old reproach, that "it spoilt with the pen what had been achieved with the sword."

Strong interventions by the military spoilt many a political conception in this war. Generally the insight and moderation of one side or the other helped to find a way out of these disputes.

With regard to the political differences which cropped up between the allied governments, I can state as the

result of my personal experience that opinions frequently clashed violently, but in the end the idea of alliance always triumphed.

Valuable time was sometimes lost in argument, but in all important questions affecting our relations with Germany which engaged me during my two periods of office, with the exception of one to which I shall refer later and in the course of which I resigned office, agreement was always reached in the end.

The alliance with Germany was maintained in council and at the front during the war as it had been maintained in times of peace.

CHAPTER VII

TURKEY

IN the war Turkey and Bulgaria allied themselves with the Central Powers in the common battle ; for they all had joint interests at stake.

Turkey scarcely had any choice. It was not only that her traditional policy naturally placed the Ottoman kingdom on the same side as Austria-Hungary and on the opposite side to Russia, but the position of Turkey too, at the time when war broke out, was a decided factor in her attitude. Russia had let loose the world war with the programme which she had announced clearly enough in the previous century, of realising her aims against Austria-Hungary and Turkey. Apart from the fact that the causes of her old opposition to the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and to Turkey in Balkan questions were still operative, feeling in Russia, which had been heated by internal ferments, had been brought up to the point of explosion by her uneasiness at Austria's alleged Ukrainophile policy in eastern Galicia, thought to be for the purpose of propaganda in Little Russia, and by the constantly growing pressure of her emigration and commercial policy, to seek economic " autarchy " and an outlet to an ice-free sea.

It was therefore quite clear to Turkey that in this war her existence was at stake.

Turkey might be able to find salvation if she helped the Central Powers to success. She might have let herself be ensnared by promises of the Entente, and have joined them in return for a promise of territorial integrity. It would have been perfectly intelligible if Turkey, exhausted by three unfortunate campaigns, had decided upon neutrality and kept out of the risks incidental to a new war. But this simple solution was soon recognised in Constantinople as being the least practicable. It was realised that the combatants would scarcely respect Turkey's neutrality, or let themselves

be restricted in their operations where extensive Turkish territory was necessary to them or in their way. This then in itself would have forced Turkey into the war.

There were those in Constantinople who favoured association with the Entente, but suspicion predominated. All the Powers of the Entente had greedy eyes upon Turkish territory, and Turkey knew what value she could place upon a guarantee of territorial integrity if she had been "rescued" by the Entente. She had had experience of this kind of thing in recent and in more remote times.

Austro-Hungarian and German diplomacy were not inactive. They did not press the Turkish government to a speedy decision, as they knew its doubts and misgivings. These resolved themselves more and more in our favour, and the development of events was eloquent.

When the arrival and purchase of the German men-of-war, the *Göben* and the *Breslau*, had caused a squadron of the Entente to gather menacingly before the Dardanelles, Turkey replied by closing the Straits. This was the first open indication of her attitude. About a month later Russian warships replied by laying mines at the entrance to the Bosphorus, and this resulted in an artillery battle. At the end of October Turkey declared war on the Entente.

Turkey's campaigns developed with varying fortune in extensive theatres of war, and were of great assistance to us, as they kept considerable forces of the enemy busy and often put him in very difficult positions. She also sent troops to our fronts, where they fought with their usual courage. Considering her weak condition when she entered the war, Turkey's achievements were surprising. Though her allies were able to offer material and financial help, the conduct of the war was made exceptionally difficult for her through internal mismanagement and difficulties of communication owing

to the extensive distances. Nevertheless the ancient military spirit of that courageous people was maintained to its end. Serious mistakes of her executive, barbarian measures such as those against the Armenians, were prejudicial to the development of her powers, and made it difficult for her allies to refrain from emphatic rebukes. But there was reason to hope that after the war even Turkey would have felt compelled, if she wished to continue to exist, to set about reforms, not merely written on paper like those of the past, but reduced to actuality by the will of her people.

Agreeing with her allies in that her war aims were directed to the maintenance of her possessions, Turkey remained by their side without faltering, up to the last moment. In the end she was completely exhausted and her strength gave way.

CHAPTER VIII

BULGARIA

BULGARIA was the last member to join our alliance, although she had not unnaturally followed the development of events with the closest attention, and her sentiments had been deeply stirred by the outbreak of war. For here an opportunity would appear to be developing, of upsetting the peace of Bukarest and retrieving the humiliation of Bulgaria. But the country had been completely exhausted by the Balkan wars, her army was disorganised and without equipment. For Bulgaria it was therefore a counsel of simple political wisdom, cautiously and as long as possible to remain strictly neutral, and to continue her work of reconstruction, especially the reorganisation of her defensive forces, as far as circumstances permitted. Meanwhile she could take her time to see how the military situation developed, and to take stock of the diplomatic situation. This was made much easier for her owing to the industry with which the Entente on the outbreak of war immediately canvassed Bulgaria's support and the revival of the idea of the Balkan League. Their zeal was intelligible. It was a matter of vital importance whether it was as friend or as foe that Bulgaria stood between Serbia, who was already in the war, and Rumania, to win whose support every effort was being made. Bulgaria's attitude would also have a decisive influence upon the situation in Turkey.

The Entente's diplomatic campaigns in Sofia and in Bukarest were closely associated. They would of course gain their most valuable assistance from the success of the Dardanelles venture, which they would not give up, and which would have forced Turkey into the combination too.

The Entente did not wish to be stingy in her offers to Bulgaria, but could make them only at the expense of the other Balkan states. The offer of Macedonia

would meet with opposition from Serbia, who did not wish to make this sacrifice in the common cause. In Thrace they were up against Greek aspirations, and with regard to Turkish territory had to go cautiously on account of Russia.

Germany and Austria-Hungary naturally had a keen desire to get Bulgaria on their side, and the general position gave reasonable grounds for hoping that they would succeed.

But military preparations in Bulgaria were very much behindhand. Politically, also, there was no danger in delay, because the promises of the Entente, though seductive, were contradictory and carried no conviction in Bulgaria.

Moreover, our preparations for the new campaign against Serbia were not yet completed. Its starting-point would be the psychological moment for Bulgaria, who could then not be restrained from falling upon Serbia.

So we did not press her. Bulgaria had become very cautious; she could not and did not need to be persuaded. Openness on our side and her own calculations and wish for revenge were all that was necessary. She would come in at what she judged to be the appropriate moment. The Entente had had plenty of time to explode her mines in Sofia. Success was denied her. Towards the end of the summer of 1915, when our preparations for the resumption of the Serbian campaign were nearly completed, we brought our negotiations with Bulgaria on to a more concrete plane and to a speedy conclusion. First the boundary disputes between Bulgaria and Turkey, who were now to be comrades in arms—they had been in the air since the Balkan war—were settled by the treaty of the 22nd August 1915. Turkey kept Adrianople and gave Bulgaria the Maritza frontier in Thrace, with a strip of territory two kilometres wide on the eastern shore.

The next matter to be dealt with was the treaties with the Central Powers: these were negotiated in Sofia with the Bulgarian government by our ambassadors, Count Tarnovski and Count Oberndorff, and at the German Headquarters in Pless by the Bulgarian military delegates. They were concluded on the 6th and 7th September. Bulgaria's conditions for joining in the war were the union of all her nationals as well as Eastern Serbia as far as Moravia and portions of Thrace, and also the Greek territory of Drama, Seres, and Kavala, if Greece should come in against us.

These war aims were essentially different from the war aims of the Central Powers, which were directed only to the maintenance of their possessions. But they do not now need to be defended against the charge of "imperialism" and "lust of conquest," seeing that, in spite of proclaiming themselves as the protectors of small nations, the Entente has shown so much understanding for the many-sided territorial aspirations of her allies, which she justified on "historical" grounds or reasons of "economic necessity," when reasons of nationality were inadequate. It is impossible sincerely to wax indignant at Bulgaria's efforts to gain a footing on the Danube east of Semendria in order to abut on to a friendly Power, after seeing the Paris Peace Conference presenting Czecho-Slovakia with the left bank of the Danube from Pressburg to the mouth of the Eipal, with its purely Magyar population, because Prague aspired to establish itself as a Danubian state on territory which for a thousand years had been historically and ethnographically Hungarian.

After Bulgaria had avenged herself on Serbia for the second Balkan war, she had the satisfaction of assisting at the tearing up of the Treaty of Bukarest of 1913. She fought side by side with Austria and Germany on a footing of equality until the end of the war. She shared

our victories and reverses. Physical and moral exhaustion caused her to collapse, like ourselves. That this collapse occurred somewhat earlier on the Bulgarian front was attributable to local conditions. Shortage of food and clothing in the army, and want at home, as well as the activities of subversive elements, had done their work more quickly.

Having been my country's representative in Bulgaria for nearly ten years (1886-95) and having been closely associated with her efforts to free herself from dependence on Russia and to achieve her own national development, I had a personal concern in the destinies of the country. My policy in Bulgaria, though not exactly acceptable to Russia, had not been hostile, but I attacked the encroachments of Russian domination which had crept in after the establishment of the principality. I did not try to cultivate an "Austrophile" policy after the Russian model, but advised the national representatives of the newly created state to be Bulgarians and nothing more. They would then naturally be the friends of Austria-Hungary, who desired their independence. I saw the last days of Prince Alexander's government, the revolution, the regency of Stambulov (whom I strongly supported in his courageous battle against the Russian supremacy), and the first years of Prince Ferdinand's reign. A disciplined population who had awoken to national consciousness grew strong, under able leaders, in their battle for independence. Their national ambition to be united with their fellow-countrymen in Turkey, however, brought them into increasing opposition, which was at first only latent, to similar efforts of the other Balkan states.

Prince Ferdinand had not yet been recognised by the other Great Powers, because Russia refused her assent. The "liberating Power" regarded Ferdinand of Coburg

as the representative of the Triple Alliance because he had occupied the throne of Bulgaria against Russia's will. In her future ambitions, therefore, Bulgaria would no longer have the patronage of Russia. But Prince Ferdinand also suffered personally very much from the failure year after year to get his position regularised internationally. Just after I left Sofia a change occurred in Bulgarian diplomacy. The Russophile party, which had been kept in the background for years, pledged itself to put the relations with Russia on a proper footing and to improve Bulgaria's prospects abroad. The party came into power, and as a guarantee of his friendly feelings for Russia, the Prince had his heir received into the Russian Church, and obtained European recognition as Russia no longer opposed it.

Bulgaria now took up a line which in essentials again followed Russia's instructions. The diplomacy of the next few years was comparatively quiet, as Russia was busy with Japan and her internal problems. When Austria-Hungary had got over her first annoyance, Bulgaria's relations with that country too again became completely friendly. Thus we reached the period of the Turkish revolution and the annexation of Bosnia, since when the Balkan Peninsula never settled down again. Russia and her clients in the Balkans thought that Turkey was ready to collapse owing to the revolution. Bulgaria had declared her independence, and her prince had been declared king. She was drawn into the great undertaking against Turkey and entered the Balkan League. She was now soon to enjoy the full fruits of her Russophile policy. Her brilliant army was exploited to overcome the common enemy, Turkey, and thereupon Serbia and Greece fell upon the ally who, having borne the brunt of the joint struggle, was now exhausted, and robbed her of the booty. Then Rumania came and did the rest. But Bulgaria got the Treaty of Bukarest.

Austria-Hungary alone concerned herself with Bulgaria in her misfortune, and demanded, though without success, the revision of this treaty, which had been concluded without regard for the interests of the European Powers. Bulgaria gratefully recognised this as an expression of Austro-Hungarian traditional friendship for that country. Even the Russophiles at last had their eyes opened as to the true sentiments of her "liberator." They perceived the depths into which they had been thrown by a policy inspired by Russia.

When I took over the direction of foreign affairs, Bulgarian public opinion welcomed me with sympathy and confidence. They remembered the man who had helped them and befriended them in difficult times, and though I do not suggest that regard for my person could have influenced their very practical and businesslike conclusions, the old friendship and confidence in me made it easier for us to get together, and helped to smooth and shorten the way for Bulgaria from a position of waiting neutrality to membership of the alliance of the Central Powers.

Germany's relations with Bulgaria, having had a different history, were essentially dissimilar. From the start, Germany's attitude to that country had not entirely agreed with ours. Bismarck himself relates in his Memoirs that "In carrying out the decrees of the Congress of Berlin, Russia expected and required that, in the local discussions about them in the East, when there was any difference of opinion between the Russian and the other interpretations, the German Commissions should, on principle, support Russia." It is true that Prince Bismarck repudiated any such suggestion, but as he wished to hamper his diplomacy as little as possible with Balkan affairs, and to show consideration for Russia after her disappointment at the Treaty of Berlin, he was not averse from allotting Bulgaria to the Russian

sphere of influence. On the other hand, Count Andrásy, as well as Count Kálnoky later, mentioned the point of view that no Power should have special rights in Bulgaria. Germany shewed little interest in Bulgaria's efforts to free herself from Russian tutelage, whereas Austria-Hungary shewed active sympathy for Bulgaria in her attempts to achieve emancipation.

Germany laid far greater stress upon her relations with Rumania, who in every way was so much closer to her. To Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria was the Balkan state whose aspirations nowhere impinged upon those of Austria-Hungary, whilst Rumania's ambitions could be satisfied almost only at the expense of the monarchy. Between Rumania and Bulgaria rivalry grew up on the Balkan Peninsula. Though prudence led us and Germany to inaugurate a policy of alliance (based on compromise) with Rumania, the subject of discord, though disguised, still existed, whereas as far as Bulgaria was concerned there was nothing to compromise about.

Germany, who in the years before the war had acquired strong commercial interests in Bulgaria and had quickly caught up with us, was diplomatically rather cooler towards Bulgaria and had a longer way to go to reach agreement than we had. But in energetic negotiations the ground was rapidly covered and complete unanimity reached.

Any state that is at war finds its destinies at the mercy of the incalculable effects of the sum-total of factors, some of which are given, the others being either not yet existent or not recognised. In the dismay at the unfortunate event, many a responsible Bulgarian statesman may have regretfully wondered whether, having regard to the position as it was then known, it was expedient for Bulgaria to intervene in the world war. I believe that she had no choice. If she joined the Entente, she could only be promised territories

which, like Macedonia and Thrace, were already allotted and would have to be taken away again, or which, like the country round Constantinople, was already destined for others. But these would be a precarious possession and the occasion for future complaints on the part of all her enemies. But if Bulgaria remained neutral, she would have finally to announce her national programme. For in this war such states only could remain neutral as had nothing to hope and nothing to fear. Neutrality was renunciation.

Bulgaria was therefore true to herself, and joined that side which offered her the possibility of saving herself from the consequences of her disastrous Balkan Alliance policy. Together with her allies she was beaten, but she did not put herself out of the reckoning, and she will have the place that is her due as a very capable people on the Balkan Peninsula.

CHAPTER IX

THE ALLIANCE AND ITS EXTENSION

THOUGH the adhesion of Bulgaria to a certain extent compensated for Italy's desertion, the latter event had seriously concentrated political sentiment both in Germany and in Austria-Hungary upon the old original alliance between the two countries, which in the war, too, completely fulfilled the expectations of its founders, and proved to be an effective and adaptable instrument of mutual defence. It was not surprising, therefore, that a few months after I took office the idea should have cropped up in Vienna and Berlin of extending the alliance in accordance with the experience gained.

In this connection Austria-Hungary always had in mind a development of the treaty, whereas in Germany there were signs of a revival of the old Bismarckian idea of converting the alliance into an organic union, and incorporating it in both kingdoms (*Memoirs*, vol. ii, p. 249), an idea which, incidentally, Bismarck killed with his own criticism.

The first detailed discussion of the alliance between the Chancellor and myself occurred at our conversation in Berlin of the 10th November 1915.

Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg stated his conviction, which, he said, was in harmony with the sentiment of the whole of Germany, that after the events and experiences of this war the alliance between the two countries should be made more intimate and placed upon a broader basis, and secured as effectively as possible against all the vicissitudes of the future. Only a closer association would open to us all the possibilities of development in a period of peace, which we hoped would be unclouded. The most important thing was that we should agree on this fundamental principle. In that case the solution of all the individual questions in the spirit of the bond which united us would be simplified.

Diplomatically the Chancellor had in mind the develop-

ment and extension of the Treaty of Alliance, with a longer period of validity; economically he was considering a correspondingly closer association of the allied Powers, and the breaking-down of customs barriers between them, so that each might support the trade of the other and present to the world a great unified customs area, which would thus be better able to protect itself and to negotiate with foreign states according to unified principles; the internal production would supplement their mutual wants, and thus they would be better able to promote their economic development.

I warmly agreed with the Chancellor that our relations with Germany, which had so triumphantly emerged from the crucial test, must acquire greater depth and substance, and I assured him that to this end he could count upon my loyal co-operation. The details would have to be very carefully considered, and as he was not yet submitting any concrete proposals, I retained the right to think over the most suitable form of extending the framework of the alliance. The question of closer commercial relations, or an economic alliance with Germany, was also being vigorously debated in the monarchy, but a uniform point of view had not yet emerged. An examination of the needs and conditions of the individual branches of production would indicate the appropriate lines of development. We should also have to take special precautions to see that we did not make the regulation of our commercial relations abroad unduly difficult. In order, however, to advance the question from the generalities of mutual expressions of goodwill, and to be able to start upon its practical treatment, I requested the Chancellor to set out in a draft the main features of the commercial association that he had in mind, in order that we might see what the German idea of it was. I was given to understand that some such draft would soon be prepared.

This was the starting-point of discussions and negotiations which, with a few intervals, continued up to the end of the war. This too was the moment when I had more or less to determine my personal attitude to the question of the future of the alliance.

It goes without saying that, as long as the alliance with Germany existed, no one could be Minister of Foreign Affairs in Austria-Hungary unless he were a convinced adherent of it. It is therefore unnecessary for me to make any special declaration as to my attitude. Like each of my predecessors since Andrassy, I could feel assured that in the question of the alliance I was in agreement with by far the greater portion of that public opinion in Austria-Hungary which was capable of political thought. There never was unanimity in our opinions about the alliance. In view of the nationalities which went to make up the monarchy, unanimity was indeed impossible, but it was not essential, as it could not have been achieved for any other political combination either. The weighty reasons which led to the formation of the alliance came to be understood amongst ever wider circles, and in the end the long peace and the respect enjoyed by the Austro-Hungarian monarchy during the period of the alliance won for it friendly toleration, even in many political quarters which thought that they had to oppose it on principle.

During the war the attitude of a part of the Austro-Hungarian peoples shifted. Those who for national reasons had been opponents of the German alliance, now saw the possibility of developments under the ægis of a victorious Germany, which led them to place their aspirations entirely on the opposite side. It was only when things went badly that those elements which were trying to break loose from the state discovered that the alliance had its points, inasmuch as it might be the means of bringing about the destruction of Austria-

Hungary, together with Germany, and thus of achieving their aims.

More important were the oscillations of sentiment of many who had been convinced supporters of the German alliance and who, now that we had not succeeded, after the enormous efforts of the first year, either in the east or in the west, in obtaining decisive successes, the fronts having settled down to trench warfare, were coming to the painful conclusion that we had to reckon with a war of long duration. The German alliance had, after all, always been a matter of real concern only to a few sections of the population of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy; the larger number had regarded it as a matter of political convenience. That was certainly not in itself a weakness, for it provided the most secure basis for such a mutual guarantee of security; and the founders of the alliance had not had any other intention. These practical considerations again came very much to the fore in the course of the war. In view of the enormous sacrifices which had already been made and which would have to be made, much anxiety was felt lest the sea of hate which raged about us as Germany's ally should overwhelm us, and it was doubted whether the monarchy had done rightly to link her destinies so closely with Germany's. Many people began more or less to reconsider the grounds which had led to the creation of the alliance.

Fate has decided against the monarchy. It has fallen into its component parts. Not until we can view the event without sentiment, in historical perspective, will it be possible to judge how many inhabitants of the old monarchy will gain advantage from the new state of things, and how many will be damaged and ruined. To no one, moreover, who played a part in the action or who suffered by the revolution, will it be a matter of indifference whether an inevitable destiny

was accomplished, or whether the disaster was caused by a mistakenly conceived policy.

I would like to recall the following facts to those who, when the first enthusiasm of the struggle which was forced upon us had cooled down, and after perceiving that it was a matter of applying all their energies without stint, and that the final victory would even then be uncertain, began to wonder whether our system of alliance had been properly constructed, and whether another alliance would not be more profitable to the vital interests of the monarchy and its peoples.

Prince Bismarck held that the force of circumstances in which he decided upon the conclusion of the treaty with Austria-Hungary compelled Germany to take this step. He made no secret of this, either to himself or to the world. Bismarck notoriously had the *cauchemar des coalitions*. It was an inspired presage of what later took the form of "encirclement." He therefore felt the need of limiting the possibilities of hostile coalition by establishing closer relations with at least one of the Great Powers. In these circumstances the choice could only lie between Russia and Austria-Hungary. One must read the Memoirs to see the calm, businesslike way in which he weighed the two alternatives, finally deciding in favour of Austria-Hungary. He reveals no touch of sentiment, but merely states that he had ascertained that the idea of the alliance was popular in Germany. This fact, too, is not given any undue importance: "So cogent seemed to me the considerations which in the political situation pointed us to an alliance with Austria that I would have striven to conclude one even in the face of a hostile public opinion." (Bismarck, *The Man and the Statesman*, p. 257.)

But no less compelling were the reasons which urged Austria-Hungary to enter into an alliance with Germany. In considering this alliance we have not only to take

into account the generally recognised advantages which it offered the monarchy throughout its duration, but also carefully to examine the position in which Austria-Hungary might be placed, but for this alliance. The problems that surrounded us—the century-old rivalry with Russia, whose Near Eastern policy was hampered by the monarchy and who encouraged the aspirations of neighbouring states which coveted Austrian territory, in order to satisfy them, or at least to use them for her own ends—maintained their threatening nature, not only if Austria-Hungary remained politically isolated, but also if she belonged to another group of Powers; if, for instance, she were allied with the Western Powers, a possibility which at times, especially between 1866 and 1870, was entertained by some of our statesmen.

In Austria and in Hungary there was certainly no conflict of interest with France and England. Our relations of every kind with these countries were excellent and remained so even after the conclusion of the alliance with Germany. But a closer political relationship with France could not have protected us from the dangers threatening us from Russia and on our southern frontiers. The three dominant factors in European politics—Russia's intentions regarding the Straits and the Balkans, France's desire for revenge, and England's concern for her sea-power—could not be eliminated. We had above all to reckon with them.

If we suppose Austria-Hungary and Germany during the latter period without any alliance, we may certainly assume that France's desire for revenge and England's envy would have found more decisive and rapid expression against an isolated Germany, while Russia would have been able to pursue her plans in the Near East much more freely against an unsupported Austria-Hungary.

I am assuming that Germany, even if isolated, would

have made the political and economic advance which the world watched with astonishment but without sympathy. Similar causes produce similar effects ; and I therefore assume that the gradual encirclement of Germany and a final attack upon a Germany without allies would have occurred very much as we have experienced it.

Austria-Hungary would have been a passive spectator of the diplomatic and later of the military campaign which in due course would have been inaugurated against Germany. Indeed, in the case of our alliance with France, Austria-Hungary might perhaps even have had to take an active part in Germany's subjection by her adversary. Germany could scarcely have survived such a contest. But what would Austria-Hungary's position have been after Germany's defeat ?

All the checks on Russia's traditional policy would then have disappeared, even if she only half succeeded in reaching an understanding with England. In conjunction with the unsatiated Balkan states and with the centrifugal elements in Austria-Hungary and in Turkey she would be able to intensify her subversive activities, and we would have undergone in a very much more acute form our experiences of the Greater Serbian propaganda between 1912 and 1914. Austria-Hungary, with Turkey and a few Balkan states, would then have been up against the enormous power of Russia and would scarcely have been equal to it.

To sum up, we may say that the dangers to which Austria-Hungary and Germany were exposed from the other Powers could not be obviated without self-surrender. The only question was whether the two Powers should meet these dangers singly and successively, or in association.

The Austro-German alliance was the inevitable reply to this question. That in the end it too was unable

to prevent the collapse is merely another argument in its favour, and demonstrates how necessary it was, and for how long a period it effectively protected the Central Powers from the still greater perils of isolation.

Our misfortune was that we could not form a still more powerful group.

The cause of our adversaries has proved to be the stronger. The victims of these events, which are now a matter of history, will the more readily resign themselves, as they are convinced that they took up the right position for their legitimate protection, for the maintenance of their integrity, and of their right to set their own house in order and to introduce the reforms necessary in accordance with the needs of the population itself—not in accordance with the dictates of foreign world-improvers who, on one-sided information and lacking any clear insight into the circumstances, generally merely succeeded in upsetting the whole apple-cart.

The German-Austro-Hungarian alliance was, with the exception of the Anglo-Portuguese, the longest known to history. After a duration of thirty-nine years it came to an end, as one of the contracting parties ceased to exist. A short time before, both parties had agreed to extend and to broaden it. This was not the result of blindness to the position in which they were placed. It expressed their desire firmly to face it, their determination to hold out together, to unite in seeking a peace of understanding, and after the war too, relying upon their proved mutual support, to proceed upon the path of work and civilisation. It also expressed their determination not to destroy themselves, and if it must be, to allow themselves to be broken only by inevitable destiny.

The hunger-blockade had completed its work in Austria-Hungary and in Germany. The front was unbroken. But at home large sections had lost their

reason through the intolerable sufferings and privations, and many of those who up to then had been in control had the leadership wrested from them. In a hothouse atmosphere internal problems, political, social, and national, all ripened together. There was no insight or energy to attempt to avert the disaster. Foreign propaganda had an easy task in Austria-Hungary, when the foundations had been undermined, and she was incapable of resistance. Unity of purpose in the existing Powers had been destroyed. The whole structure of the state collapsed, and carried with it the front, which, though agitated by events at home, was still offering defiance to the enemy.

In Germany the early developments leading up to the catastrophe were as similar to those in Austria-Hungary as was possible in view of the entirely different structure of the two empires. But the question of their continued existence was not equally at stake for the two allies. In Austria-Hungary much more even than in Germany it was the duty of the responsible leaders to make as efficient and timely provision as possible for the maintenance and underpinning of the internal structure in those fateful days, this being the only thing that might still perhaps exert a strengthening influence on its external cohesion.

CHAPTER X

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS DURING THE WAR

IN all portions of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy internal affairs certainly constituted as important a problem throughout the whole war as the course of events in the field. It was her unsolved internal problems that had brought Austria-Hungary into the peril of war, and the event of the war could not fail to exercise a determining influence upon these problems.

It would be incomplete here only to consider the enormous upheaval which we experienced after our defeat. If the war had ended differently, the victorious armies would on their return home to their native countries have demanded, as a reward for their achievements, much of what the peoples have acquired from the fragments of the shattered monarchy. Who would have had the power to prevent them?

As in peace so during the war, internal policy in both states of the monarchy did not come within the province of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, but it was the subject of serious anxiety to him. The course which it took was important, not only for Austria-Hungary's security in the conduct of the war, but also as affecting her power for negotiating with the outside world. The High Command was naturally concerned with security at home in this connection, and it actually took such precautions as, in its own opinion, were necessary according to the methods of military law. This satisfied military requirements behind the front. In some cases, too, military courts intervened in order to check nationalist movements regarded as damaging to the conduct of the war. But by these means symptoms only were cured and palliative measures applied. The development of our internal policy thus was not thereby advanced one inch. After all it was not the time to undertake this task during the war, when every effort had to be made to meet the requirements of the fighting peoples,

which surpassed everything that had been previously known. But it was impossible to delay taking such precautions as would prevent the sharpening of internal differences from creating sentiments which might make it more difficult to establish the new order of things after the conclusion of peace. It does not fall within the scheme of this sketch to consider whether the two governments of the monarchy always took the right action in this matter, and whether they succeeded in keeping their necessary freedom of action, side by side with the comprehensive powers of supreme military command.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy had the difficult task of pursuing a uniform policy which had to be based upon the composite intention of the two states of the monarchy, as represented by their governments. It was necessary in each case as it arose to search for or to create such uniformity of intention, and the Acts of Settlement of 1867 had therefore provided that the Minister for Foreign Affairs should conduct his foreign policy in agreement with the two Prime Ministers, which meant that they had a determining influence upon the direction of foreign policy. On the other hand, the Minister for Foreign Affairs had no power to intervene in the internal policy of the two states, although, especially in the complicated national conditions in the monarchy, foreign policy was often affected, and might be profoundly embarrassed, by events at home.

Austro-Hungarian diplomacy therefore revealed a certain clumsiness on account of the elaborate apparatus which was required in order to obtain uniformity. The opposition of either of the parties, unless it could be eliminated by persuasion, was sufficient to cripple the effectiveness of the director of foreign policy. On the other hand, he could not fail to follow with critical

attention the course of home affairs in both states, on account of the possible reaction upon foreign policy. Though he lacked the legal power to make his influence felt, the nature of the case sometimes made it desirable that he should do so, though this was only possible by way of persuasion. Difficulties seldom arose. Those between Count Andr  ssy and Count Hohenwart regarding the Bohemian Fundamental Article, and that between Count K  lnoky and Baron B  nffy about the Papal *nuncio* are generally remembered. During the dualism a tradition of 'collaboration in close personal intercourse had grown up, whereby the necessary agreement in all questions of current policy was built up, and differences of opinion could be disposed of without much trouble.

I found this practice, which naturally facilitated my work, in full swing during the war too, and during my first period of office I always found that the Prime Ministers, Count St  rgkh and Herr von K  rber in Austria, and Count Tisza in Hungary, shewed appreciative understanding and warmly supported my political aims.

These political aims were directed in the first instance to the further conduct and ending of the war, and could only have an indirect influence upon the future. The results to be aimed at were limited by the various possible issues of the war. We had of course always to start by considering what Austria-Hungary required for her security and her further development ; but the basic assumption was success in the field.

But internally, too, Austria-Hungary had to be made capable of meeting the requirements of the future. Victory would to a certain extent have assured this. In regard to creating the other necessary internal conditions for pursuing a salutary policy, both governments certainly found themselves much hindered in arriving at a reliable estimate of the value of their intentions,

partly by inertia and the force of tradition, and partly by the increasing impatience of those who were thirsting for innovation, and not least, by the requirements of the war.

Moreover, such a time was certainly not favourable for carrying out radical changes at home, though decisions based on a clear programme were necessary, such as might be calculated to dissipate certain awkward situations which were obviously cropping up and which could no longer be solved by temporary measures. We had to hold out the prospect of satisfaction in any quarter where the redress of grievances was pressed with justice and in a businesslike way. For the main thing to aim at was that the peoples of the monarchy should come out of the war in a conciliatory spirit, so that we could then proceed with a prospect of success to the task of giving them as much liberty as possible within the framework of the monarchy.

This was the aim to which my thoughts and endeavours were directed. And to this end I consistently gave my advice. To incorporate it in action was outside my sphere.

Without wishing to pass individual criticisms upon what was done or left undone in internal affairs in Austria and Hungary, one can definitely state that the results were deplorable. Where people had got on in peacetime they got on in the field ; but all existing differences survived and became most sharply accentuated under the common flag. Only a speedy and successful issue of the war could have produced any other result.

The war found Austria without a parliament. The causes which produced this constitutional interval continued, and although it would have been of great value to the cause to have secured the unequivocal support of the representatives of the people at the moment when Austria-Hungary had to take the vital decision,

the Austrian government found it easier to dispense with the summoning of parliament on the occasion of the declaration of war than to expose itself to disloyal and politically harmful demonstrations, and to unpleasant manifestations such as would certainly have occurred. Opinion in Austria itself was much divided as to whether the government acted wisely in this, and really chose the lesser of two evils. In any case, for a long time no particular pressing forward of the parliamentary parties was noticeable, and public opinion too only gradually began to show a more lively wish that parliament should be summoned when the government had occasioned much dissatisfaction and bitterness through many regulations which were alleged to increase the hardships and sufferings incidental to the war.

It was impossible, and indeed there was no occasion for me to bring my influence to bear upon this state of affairs, although it would have been useful to me to create an opportunity for the meeting of the delegations, and in spite of the fact that the outside world had inadequate opportunities of appreciating our public opinion, since they could hear only the voice of the Hungarian parliament and of the Hungarian government.

The peculiarity of the working of the delegations apparatus was that joint ministers were directly responsible for the delegations, while the latter were selected and summoned through the two governments. Moreover, foreign policy, in which the two Prime Ministers had a share of responsibility, had to have their support, and this was only possible if they themselves commanded a majority in the delegation. Count Stürgkh may have had good reason for not summoning the Austrian parliament ; his action made it impossible for Austrian delegations to meet. A meeting, even of the earlier delegation, if it could have been arranged—and many politicians thought it admissible—would have

been undesirable, parliamentary conditions being what they were. I had therefore to dispense with the public explanation of my policy before the appropriate forum, and this certainly did not make my position any easier. The only thing that was left to me was to establish confidential personal relations with such parliamentary persons as were accessible to me in Vienna. Such conversations were of great value to me too, because I could in this way at very critical times, such as during the Italian, Rumanian, and Polish questions, ascertain approximately whether I was in sympathy with Austrian public opinion.

Bohemian affairs constituted the most difficult chapter in Austrian internal affairs. Even before the war the Czech leaders had discarded the policy of mere obstructionism and begun to ignore the state. The Czechs had already established sympathetic relations wherever the Austro-Hungarian monarchy was unpopular ; on the outbreak of war their emigrants nursed these connections, and they set up a kind of revolutionary government in Paris. In Bohemia itself they took up an attitude of passive resistance to the war. It is well known how a large proportion of the Czech troops interpreted their duties at the front. Under such conditions it was extraordinarily difficult for the Austrian government to negotiate for a settlement with Bohemia, with any prospect of success. And yet the situation urgently called for something to be done. The Chief Army Command dealt with alarming incidents in Bohemia as well as they could by having recourse to indictments for high treason before a military court. Count Stürgkh and all the other ministers who learnt of the intentions of the military authorities expressed their misgivings ; but they had to give way. There cannot be anybody who does not regard the Kramár case as an error of the régime of that time, and I shall not waste words

over it. But it does give occasion for some general observations.

The indictment of Kramár and his associates was an expression of indignation felt in our army at the passive resistance practised in Bohemia. But a whole people cannot be guilty of high treason. High treason consists of criminal activities of individuals or groups directed against the security of the fundamental institutions of a country or of a people. The *action* of Dr. Kramár and his associates came within the jurisdiction of a court. His *sentiments* were those of the whole Czech people, and they were a matter of politics.

In the judgment of most politicians the time was no longer opportune for further negotiations with the parties in Bohemia, for the material for negotiation, accumulated in many previous attempts, was exhausted. We had to bargain, and to give as much as possible. Thus Count Stürgkh evolved the *octroi* scheme, and, as I think, not inappropriately. Everything depended upon the moment, the scope, and the right application. In popular speech the word *octroi* suggests something arbitrary. But originally the word *octroi* implies only a concession.

There was a time in 1915 when it might have been assumed that it was possible to relieve the situation in Bohemia by simply granting the Czechs, by a government act, all those political concessions which had already been offered to them in earlier negotiations. This would not have satisfied the Czechs, but it was conceivable that they might accept what was given them, without expressly giving up their claim to the rest. The Czechs might have regarded the *octroi* as a partial solution, and the state as the limit to which they were prepared to go, but both parties might have accepted it as a provisional settlement of the questions in dispute, regarding which actual experience and future developments would decide.

Nobody could have said whether in 1915 the separatist tendencies of the Czech nation had already gone so far as to make a compromise impossible, but an attempt might have been made to concede what one must have known could not be refused indefinitely. At that time the monarchy had the prestige of its successes in the field, and prejudiced though they might be, the Czechs could not base their political calculations on the certainty of the Entente coming out victorious.

Meanwhile the favourable moment passed. Count Stürgkh, who wanted the *octroi* and regarded it as possible, failed in the decisive action necessary to carry his plan into effect, and then his own misgivings increased. The opposition to the Prime Minister's ideas, which had become notorious and which could only have been successful if they had come as a surprise, increased. The Czechs grew less and less amenable the more the war assumed the character of an obstinate struggle, the end of which could not be foreseen. If the idea of the *octroi* had a sound root to it at all which might have developed into satisfactory relations with Bohemia, it soon withered away in the tempests of the war. Sullen discontent brooded over Bohemia. The Czech exponents abroad kept this spirit alive in Paris, and thus wove the threads which bound their fate more closely to that of the Entente.

Bohemia became an embarrassment to us in our foreign policy, and a serious item on the debit side of our balance sheet. Her agents in the enemy camp obtained recognition as a national and revolutionary government. Negotiations were conducted with them, and agreements were concluded in accordance with their most exalted ambitions. Being always on the spot, they succeeded in enforcing their one-sided view of the case and in prejudicing the Entente Powers more and more against Austria-Hungary.

At a time when the Austrian Reichsrat was again in session, when Bohemian members were taking part in its activities and the Austrian administration in Bohemia was still completely functioning, there was already in Paris a recognised Bohemian government, and, piling fiction upon fiction, they actually arrived at the thesis (from which fatal conclusions were drawn for Austria-Hungary) that "Czecho-Slovakia" and "Southern Slavonia," as allies of the Entente, were in a state of war with Austria-Hungary.

Such was the method adopted by them in proceeding to dismember the monarchy.

The question whether any political party in Austria or Hungary of serious consideration showed such inclination to meet the wishes of the nationalities as would have gone far enough to induce the majorities in the foreign-speaking groups of peoples to offer a determined resistance to separatist tendencies at home and abroad, must be answered in the negative. The only possibility, therefore, of saving the integrity or even the existence of Austria-Hungary lay in victory, or at any rate in coming out unconquered.

Was the problem, in the terrible form in which the development of the war presented it, capable of solution at all? An adequate answer to this question could have been furnished only by serious and persistent efforts to accommodate the principles on which the Danube monarchy rested, to the requirements of the time. During the period when the Austrian constitution took form, many ingenious schemes of compromise were evolved, to criticise which would not be appropriate here, though it can be stated as a fact that in the course of negotiations they conduced to partial and temporary alleviations of the situation, though none of them was capable of solving the Austrian nationalities problems.

This was no doubt partly due to the lack of confidence shown by both sides in calculating the scope and effects of the suggestions for compromise. One side asked too much and the other offered too little. There was generally an element of suspicion about the negotiations ; moreover, the range of questions changed, as time passed ineffectively. The attitude of either side alternately hardened and relaxed according to internal and external combinations. Then came the war, which all the peoples of the monarchy felt to be a fateful time, the event of which was bound to exercise a most profound and direct influence upon the future of Austria and of the monarchy. During the war period, therefore, the nationalities were naturally disposed to await the development of events rather than to negotiate, while for the state it was a time to make far-seeing preparations for the aims which it had in view. It was in this connection that the proposal, for what it was worth, of the Bohemian *octroi* came up. After it had petered out, and dissatisfaction with Count Stürgkh's government had grown more and more acute, public opinion in Austria became very uneasy. The idea became prevalent that the position was untenable, that " something " must happen, but nobody could say what, and who was to bring it about. The characteristic feature of the latter period of Count Stürgkh's government was the lack of any clear programme at all offering any prospect of curing the internal situation, though his name had inspired confidence and hope in extensive circles.

One thing that emerged more and more clearly was the general demand that parliament should be summoned. Even Count Stürgkh could not continue deaf to it. When a tragic fate relieved the Prime Minister of office and of his life, the summoning of the representatives of the people had become an inevitable necessity for the cabinets of Körber, Count Clam-Martinitz, and Seidler, who followed him and who prepared the way for it.

The parliamentary sessions which now followed, at a time when I was no longer directing foreign affairs, were characterised by bitter criticism and serious attacks upon the civil and military administration in the war. They exposed all our internal sufferings to a brilliant searchlight and did not trouble to disguise in any way the most extremist aspirations, without giving the slightest assistance in dealing with outstanding problems. These debates first clearly revealed to the Austrian government, for which up to then only the rather inadequate official sources of information had been available, what the sentiment of the country was.

While the condition of affairs in the territories of the kingdom of Wenceslas became more and more obvious, the general state of mind amongst the Southern Slavs, where the threads of an extensive separatist propaganda were patent, was no less apparent. The Austrian Poles had identified their destiny with that of the liberated kingdom of Poland, and simultaneously, although keenly opposed to them, the Ukrainians celebrated the rebirth of their nation after Russia's defeats.

In this general movement the Germans in Austria were the conservative element, defending the cohesion of the whole. They had already surrendered much of their old position, and additional relaxations seemed inevitable, though an adequate basis of compromise was obviously beyond the limits of their capacity for political action, as the nationalities too were unwilling to tolerate any longer the smallest remnants of German supremacy. And in point of fact it was not achieved. When the manifesto of the 17th October 1918 proclaimed the conversion of Austria into a federal state, this was not, as was often thought, the occasion or the signal for Austria's dissolution, but the last belated attempt at any rate to make a show of holding the state together.

Austria's dissolution had already been completed internally.

The development of affairs in Hungary followed essentially the same laws. Various though the constitutional and practical relationships of the nationalities were to the state, all the non-Magyar peoples of the kingdom contained movements which in the view of the leading nation were not compatible with the uniform Hungarian character of the state. Since the settlement in 1867 the Hungarian element had increased considerably in strength in the towns, owing to cultural influences. The population of the land maintained the national *status quo*, and the language frontiers, with inconsiderable alterations. If the mixture of languages was less generally noticeable in Hungary than in Austria, this was due to the greater centralisation of the administration and to the composition of the parliament, in which the nationalities were far from being represented according to the proportions of the population.

I may be excused for mentioning all these well-known matters here in order to shew that the nationalities problem in the two states of the monarchy differed, not in its essential nature, but only in legal forms and in the state of development attained. They also tend to shew that Austria's constitution of Crown territories and Hungary's unified administration gave equal scope to the nationalities to maintain the possessions of their peoples intact, and to make them amenable to those influences which would prevent their hopes and ambitions for an unfettered national life from being starved. In this centrifugal tendencies for a long time played a comparatively small part. The protectors of the ancient traditional structure of the kingdom, and the masses who spoke a different language, for many years stood on the same ground and strove to maintain the existing deep-rooted unity of the state. In principle

there was no obstacle to an understanding on the subject of a greater freedom for the non-Magyar population, coupled with a strict security for the integrity of the state. In Hungary the administrative reform, which had been decided upon in principle, and a keen agitation for a substantial extension of the franchise, which would have secured a stronger representation in parliament for the nationalities, seemed to supply the appropriate means for achieving this.

However, the feelings that resulted from the Balkan wars and the peace of Bukarest materially changed the political outlook. Serbia's and Rumania's successes had their reactions on their fellow-countrymen in Austria and Hungary. Russia's prestige, which had been raised by the Balkan alliance, was a factor in Prague, as well as in Lemberg, Belgrade, and Bukarest. The Czar may have gone to Constanza ; he had also visited the King of Italy at Racconigi. Suddenly all the national questions in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, from being purely home problems, became quite definitely problems of foreign affairs too.

This came out very clearly in the negotiations which the Hungarian Prime Minister conducted with the Hungarian Rumanians in 1914 and 1915. Quite apart from external affairs or anything connected with the war, it had been part of Count Tisza's programme to endeavour to reach an understanding and reconciliation with the Rumanian inhabitants of Hungary and Siebenburgen, based upon national concessions. Though entirely disinterested, this move could not be dissociated altogether from the events in the Balkans. Rumania had persistently attempted to show active interest in her fellow-nationals, though her efforts had of course always been declined, as constituting an interference in our internal affairs. The fact that at a time when Rumania's attitude was a matter of great concern to us,

Count Tisza began negotiations with Rumanian leaders in Hungary, not unnaturally suggested *captatio benevolentiae*, and Tisza's move lost in effect both at home and abroad. When on the outbreak of war we began our efforts to induce Rumania to fulfil her duty as an ally, or at any rate to keep her out of the war, other considerations besides the question of her loyalty to the alliance came up for discussion, and amongst them the question of her treatment of the Rumanians in Hungary. It would naturally have been very desirable if the Rumanians living amongst us had been so contented that they would have repudiated any external attempts to improve their lot, if, that is to say, Tisza's policy of reforms had already achieved success. But during the war his schemes, however cautiously they were introduced, always seemed to be a corollary of our policy towards Rumania, while at the same time we could not consider discussing our internal affairs with her, even if she consented to fulfil her duty under the alliance. Rumania after all was not as concerned about the welfare of her fellow-nationals in Hungary, who could scarcely be said to be worse off than her own subjects, as to bring about a state of affairs which would enable her best to provide for the welfare of all Rumanians.

Count Tisza's attempt to solve the internal Rumanian problem by way of negotiation was well meant and sincere, but, proceeding as it did from assumptions that were not entirely in accordance with the facts, and being liable to misunderstanding owing to the time when it was made, it is not surprising that it could not succeed during the war; especially as Bratianu's unalterable conviction that the Entente were "mathematically certain" of final victory was well known to the Hungarian and Rumanian leaders too, and had not failed to exert a profound influence upon their general attitude.

The problem of the Rumanians at home was now inseparably bound up with the problem of Rumanians abroad. The second Treaty of Bukarest contained a solution of it favourable to us. In the general collapse both problems were dealt with together, this time upon the ruins of the empire which Rumania had not helped to conquer, though she helped herself to the common booty.

The Austro-Hungarian monarchy, the last form of the Eastern Empire on and around the Danube basin, was not a fortuitous structure, but the historical result of geographic, ethnologic, and economic necessities. The causes which created this group of peoples and from time to time altered their composition, would for the future too have determined the laws of their further development. We, the official protectors of the venerable structure, were convinced of its adaptability to new developments. Such crises as arose resulted no less from the unimaginative desire of the various governments to cling to familiar, but outgrown and inadequate, administrative formulæ and delimitations of powers, than from the violent pressure of rising peoples, and the coming to the surface of concealed forces. Simply to speak of the sickness and decay of Austria-Hungary, as was often done within and without its boundaries, did not meet the case. What the course of development revealed were not symptoms of decay, but the exuberant expansion and development of the parts within a framework which required expansion. For this, extensive provision should and could have been made without damaging the essential interests of the whole. Such had been my conviction for many years, as I had always stated without reserve as occasion arose, during the time when I was in charge of the administration of the flourishing provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, though

I seldom gained my object. It was not difficult to obtain agreement in principle, but in concrete questions the opposing views of the various authorities who had to assist in the decision were sharply opposed to each other.

However that may be, Austria-Hungary was justified in the point of view that she alone was qualified to cure her internal troubles. The monarchy consistently maintained this point of view towards all foreign attempts to introduce a cure. During the war this was also for a long time the view of the enemy. In his speech of the 30th July 1917, Balfour, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, said, "How are we to deal with great and ancient monarchies such as Austria-Hungary? How will Austria-Hungary . . . solve those internal problems which she herself and nobody else must solve?" In the tenth of his Fourteen Points of the 8th June 1918 Wilson demands that those reforms in the monarchy which seemed to him to be necessary shall be carried into effect, and awaits the granting of autonomy by the powers that be.

At the time of the Balkan crises, which were the beginning of the world convulsions, many politicians of wide views demanded radical reforms, in both states of the monarchy, of many conditions which were recognised as untenable. If they had then energetically taken the matter in hand, there would have been a good prospect of success.

When we were in the middle of the world conflagration we had to think above all of the means of quenching it, of saving the building and its inhabitants. There was neither time nor strength for altering the structure. But with a view to the future we had to avoid any prejudicial action, and to take care not to neglect anything urgent. To keep one's eye on this was part of one's

duty in external affairs as far as internal problems were concerned. My efforts in this matter were directed to seeing that the necessary precautions for the security of the army and its connections, and the measures for maintaining internal peace and order which had to be taken against elements dangerous to the state, should as far as possible be kept outside the sphere of controversial politics, and should not embitter them through the suggestion of national persecution. The responsibility and powers of the military authorities during a war and the number of their executive organs are so great that mistakes may happen with the best will in the world. The dividing line between civil and military authority in wartime is so essentially modified that friction is almost inevitable. At such times the informer's business flourishes, confuses the administration of justice, and creates much bitterness. In the complicated national relationships in the monarchy such incidents were nearly always connected with nationalism and did not tend to reconcile the peoples to each other.

But to bring about such reconciliation by any practical means was necessarily the aim of any future policy in Austria-Hungary. The monarchy could have no more step-children. In order to be able to work towards this aim after the war, no new rifts must be allowed to appear during the war, nor must the subjects of dispute be allowed to increase. Mistakes of this nature were particularly deplorable.

The monarchy was fighting to maintain her dominions intact, and, as far as the outside world was concerned, the Minister for Foreign Affairs had to see to this. But they had to be effectively protected at home too, and in spite of most zealous interest he could have no direct share in this, owing to his constitutional position as a departmental minister outside the cabinets.

He could only by maintaining close touch with both governments keep his hand on the pulse of the fighting and suffering peoples, in order to give assistance and advice where assistance was most urgently required and advice would be acceptable. I directed my attention to seeing that mistakes such as were inevitable with such an enormous apparatus in those nerve-racking times should not lead to a greater estrangement between the peoples of Austria-Hungary, and to carrying safely in its *status quo* the old association which was being protected in the brotherhood of arms, into peace conditions whose business it would be to introduce good relationships wherever they were still lacking or had been destroyed.

All the responsible quarters in the monarchy concerned were united in their determination to save Austria-Hungary and to place her on new foundations. As to the nature of those, unanimity had certainly not yet been attained, but everybody wanted to get rid of the old desultory methods. The military and civil authorities acted differently according to their characteristic differences of method and temperament, but even when they disagreed, both were aiming by different methods at the same object, to bring the Austro-Hungarian monarchy out of the war into a period of rejuvenation. Between Austria and Hungary, too, there was a good deal of friction connected with the conduct of the war, principally in commercial questions, but there was no appreciable obstacle to an understanding as to the objects to be aimed at after the war.

A speedy and successful termination of the war was Austria-Hungary's only hope of passing easily from a crisis which shook her whole structure into a period of peaceful and prosperous development.

The unexpected difficulties developed as a consequence of the indefinite prolongation of the war. Opinions

may vary as to whether internal policy was well conducted in the two states of the monarchy during the war. After the final result any criticism is justified, but it should not be overlooked that one cannot apply the customary standards in view of the unprecedented range of the struggle, which had inextricably involved the universal activities of the military command and of the civil administration.

In external policy, which had to adapt itself to the world situation and to our relations with our allies, though its only real basis could be the strength of the two states of the monarchy, I was at pains to exploit diplomatically the unprecedented concentration of energy and will-power upon victory on the part of our peoples, and where possible to key up the internal resistive force through indications of our external activities. The course of events in which, in spite of all our heroic endeavours and our numerous military victories, the position of the Central Powers grew more and more difficult, and was certainly not favourable to such attempts.

What was needed for its internal consolidation by the country which had been involved in the war so entirely against its own inclination, which asked so little of the world and only wished to be left undisturbed, and what all its peoples were at one in longing for, was peace, if it could only be attained with honour.

CHAPTER XI

PEACE POLICY

I MADE it a principle of my period of office always to think of peace. I lay, so to speak, in wait for any opportunity to take up our peace work at the time and place where possibility should reveal itself without binding ourselves to limiting formulæ. In my opinion, it was our duty in the war always to have the sword in one hand and the olive branch in the other. The flash of the sword should never obliterate the olive branch; it should show it up more brightly. The olive branch was the goal, and the sword only the means of our defence. It was my constant and honest wish that if things did not turn out thus, the guilt should not be mine.

When I took office in January 1915 the war had been going on for months and was only just beginning to develop. After our rapid and brilliant, but incomplete, successes in the one theatre of war, and our energetic defensive movement in the other (which, however, was soon arrested), the enemy armies were prepared to deal new and decisive blows. The opinion of the greater number of persons of the time, whether well informed or not, whether actually engaged in the war or merely suffering from its effects, that a modern world war could not be of long duration, was beginning to waver. The efforts being made were already on a fearful scale, but not even yet had all those come in who were to take part in the war; some of them were still completing their diplomatic arrangements. But one consideration especially caused me to fear, in spite of my sincere wishes and dwindling hope, that the war would continue up to the final exhaustion of ourselves, and perhaps of both sides. Leaving out of account the question of "responsibility for the war" which has so vexed the conscience of mankind and the activities of publicists, the causes of the war were deeply rooted in slowly developing forces within the states, which were the chief

factors in the world drama. These developments eventually came into conflict, and unless compromises were achieved they were bound to lead to disasters. These forward movements of the Powers along paths which could not run parallel for ever and were always subject to the risk of crossing each other, were certainly not intended to result in collisions. On the contrary, when such conflicts threatened to become inevitable, the governments always endeavoured to settle their interests by agreement, and to confine themselves to the weapons of competition. I do not believe in the desire for war of governments or peoples. History, especially of the last twenty years, is rich in examples of great and successful diplomatic efforts—they will be generally remembered—to ward off political storms and to find ways out of conflicts of interests which were becoming dangerously acute. Side by side with the growing fear that the desire to expand of so many powerful and growing communities could not be satisfied without following to its logical conclusion the law of “the survival of the fittest,” there was throughout the world a deep concern for the maintenance of peace. There was never so much talk about the will to peace as at times when the danger of war was most imminent.

And this was not mere cant and hypocrisy. It was the voice of the world’s conscience, entangled in problems and rivalries, from which the competing states, through the laws of their development, could not tear themselves free, and through which they saw the maintenance of peace threatened. Every Power felt that it was justified in its aims and undertakings, and believed itself entitled to the consideration, and possibly to the fear, of the others. Many of the sincere attempts to reach an understanding, which were not neglected when matters threatened to reach a crisis, were successful. To these belong Mursteg and Algeciras, Björko and Reval,

Potsdam and London, Abbazia and Baltischport. The consciousness of terrible responsibility was everywhere so strong that the world could not but have a feeling of relief each time when a diplomatic agreement solved difficulties or postponed them. It is true that when contentious claims were thus partially disposed of, there was danger for the future. What had been refused or abandoned was seldom forgotten and cropped up on future occasions.

Thus the accumulation of repressed desires, of outstanding disputes, of anxiety to make the most of any favourable set of circumstances, increased and kept the feelings of all the peoples in an absolutely intolerable suspense. War was in the air; nobody wanted it, everybody feared it, but it came.

To all those who took part in it, even to those who, in the intoxication of dominant political catchwords, had half unconsciously worked to bring it about, the war was really an abomination. It was an abomination even for Russia, although it was her government that actually let it loose. For nobody else would have had the melancholy temerity to set Europe aflame.

Those in authority in Russia took refuge in war from the untenable position at home. Moreover, what further decided Russia was the coincidence, as at a focal point, of all the main lines which had determined her policy since Peter the Great. Through her agreement with England she had obtained a free hand in the East. France had equipped her. The desire for an ice-free sea through the Straits of Constantinople had become irresistible and conveniently coincided with her old national aim of freeing all Christians in the Balkans from Turkish dominion. The Russian autocracy felt its foundations shaken through the permeating fermentations at home. The only thing that could give fresh prestige to the discredited régime and divert the

masses from the allurements of revolutionary propaganda was the speedy realisation of the old ideals : the cross on Santa Sofia and the liberation of all their Slavonic brethren through the overthrow of Austria-Hungary and Germany, who wished to rule in the Balkans and in Turkey ; especially of Austria-Hungary, who did not scruple to sow discord even amongst the Russian people through her "Ukrainophile machinations."

Russia did no less to speed up the introductory phases of the catastrophe. The formation of the first Balkan League, which was directed against Turkey, the Balkan wars and the Peace of Bukarest, the encouragement of Serbia to intensive propaganda activity in Austria-Hungary, the efforts to found a second Balkan League directed straight at the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, were swift stages on the road along which events were irresistibly taking their course. At the same time Russia was making enormous military preparations ; but these could not quite keep pace with the Serbian propaganda which had been launched. The shots at Sarajevo came rather too soon for Russia ; but Serbia had to be protected ; the Czar's promise to the Prime Minister Pašić at his farewell audience on the 2nd February 1914—"our respects to your king and tell him that we will do anything for Serbia"—was kept. Russia mobilised.

The entry of the other combatants into the war followed automatically on Russia's action. The outbreak of war was felt, by all the states who entered the struggle, to be a painful and fateful moment. Just as it is a myth invented by our former enemies that we frivolously lit the torch of war, so no thoughtful person can fail to recognise that our enemies, too, shuddered at finding that their persistent policy of expansion, and the satisfaction of their feelings of jealousy and revenge, had brought them to the decisive test of a conflict of

immeasurable extent, towards which, however, they had consistently worked, whether their intentions were clear or not.

The war was of such a kind that no doubtful event was admissible, since the efforts which it involved could not be repeated. Unless it were possible to win the war in the first onslaught, it was certain, and was soon confirmed by all available experience, that the Entente would continue to struggle with the resolute determination not to flag until she had attained her object. In view of her composition, she could not retire from the struggle until she had either conquered or had been overpowered so as not to be able to continue fighting, because otherwise she would have been put in the wrong in view of her public statements, and would have disowned her whole policy; she would have had irrevocably to renounce some of her highest aims pursued tenaciously over a long course of years; and she was fighting to secure certain demands of her members which could only be gained at the expense of the territorial integrity of the Central Powers, and could therefore not be granted by them without self-surrender.

The position of the Central Powers, and therefore also of Austria-Hungary, was different. We were driven into a defensive war which in the military sense did not begin until 1914, but was occasioned by a political agitation over a lengthy period, which Serbia conducted with the greatest audacity against our territorial security, and which she could not have carried on unless prompted and directed by Russia. Serbia never carried out the obligations towards Austria-Hungary which she assumed in her Note of the 23rd February 1909. From agitation by word and writing, as well as through emissaries, they proceeded to the propaganda of action. The murder of 28th June 1914 was only one of a series of systematically planned attacks, and a frequently in-

adequate appreciation of the occasion of the war as well as of the extent of the danger which threatened the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, arose from the fact that the flash of lightning which lit up a momentary situation left its real occasion in the dark. Though a large portion of the world may have believed in a Serbian act of vengeance for alleged oppressive tendencies of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, the fact was that for years the monarchy had been patiently defending itself against aggressive efforts to break loose, which had to be put an end to if the monarchy was to survive.

Austria-Hungary wished to conduct her quarrel with Serbia alone, and it was not her fault if Serbia and her patrons selected a time of general political tension in order to increase their provocations up to a point which was intolerable.

Probably nobody believes to-day that the inflammable material everywhere accumulated would have been less liable to catch fire, or that the danger of a world catastrophe would have been any smaller, if Austria-Hungary had borne with lamblike patience the last bloody provocation of Serbian propaganda, the echo of which in Serbia was almost more filled with hatred than the deed itself.

When the coalition between our enemies and those of Germany made Serbia's affair their own—and it was now really a question of protecting the existence of the monarchy against the greed of her neighbours—our war became a real war of defence.

This fact also determined our political attitude during the war. At first all our efforts were engaged in warding off the enormous attack in the east. When the tidal wave of the Russian attack had spent itself upon the steel walls of the German and Austro-Hungarian armies, and the immediate danger to our existence as a state seemed to have been averted, we were able to entertain

the idea of peace. Firmly adhering to our war aim of self-preservation, we could at any time stop the fight when we had succeeded in achieving the security of our undiminished existence as a state.

I shall not discuss the war aims of our opponents, which have since become history, and an actuality desired by many and painful to some; but in their pitilessness, in the form in which they found expression in the Entente's reply of the 10th January 1917 to President Wilson's proposal for mediation, they quite clearly show that the Entente had certain definite objects in view, which could not possibly have arisen from the accident of our war with Serbia, but which never had any prospect of being realised without a war. It follows that the Entente had either to renounce their plans or follow a dangerous, restless policy, such as was calculated sooner or later to bring the world to the verge of war; and it was therefore unreasonable, to say the least of it, to condemn us because, exasperated beyond the limit, we were forced in the end to act in self-defence, and thus furnished the enemy coalition with a pretext for satisfying all those numerous aspirations which had no connection at all with the Serbian dispute.

We are indebted to Clemenceau for two sayings which illustrate the value to be placed upon the protestations of the Entente in condemnation of our Serbian policy. On signing the Treaty of Versailles the French Prime Minister delivered himself of the heartfelt exclamation, "I have waited forty-nine years for this quarter of an hour!"

In his speech of the 29th September 1919 Clemenceau said, "France would most gladly have accepted a peace during the war which would have brought her nothing but Alsace-Lorraine."

Our adversaries then deprecated war, but they used it, each for his own purposes. The danger to world

peace arose from the association and cumulative effect of these purposes, and not through Austria-Hungary's policy in Serbia.

It was an association without parallel in the world's history that finally took the field against the Central Powers, and for the members of the association it was a unique opportunity, which would never occur again, of realising all, even the boldest, of their still unsatisfied ambitions.

When the war was under way its soon became clear that the Entente, aware of her numerical and economic superiority, was not influenced by her momentary military position, and was making the most thorough preparations to exploit all her chances of success, determined not to sacrifice any of her principal objects to a compromise. In fact, even when she was most hard pressed in the field she gave no sign of any general readiness to negotiate, especially as some of the essential demands of the Entente had reference to territorial possessions of the Central Powers and could therefore not be discussed by the latter as long as they were unbeaten.

The position between the two sides then, from about the middle of 1915, was that the Central Powers, having come safely through the first threat to their existence, were in a position to offer the hand of friendship, but the Entente did not show the slightest inclination to pause until she had carried through her campaigns to their logical conclusion, in order then to be able to dictate such conditions of peace as would decide, according to her own requirements, all questions which had latterly been at issue between the Powers.

While therefore perpetually occupied in wondering how to alter the terrible course of events, I could not help regarding any pacific ideas, whatever form they took, as having little prospect at that time. For the

enemy never admitted any doubt as to the final victory, and the entry of Italy into the war had increased their confidence. Nevertheless I could not allow myself to slacken in looking carefully about for any possibility of peace, however slight it might seem to be. The continued demonstration of our readiness to consider peace could but serve to stimulate the efforts to open the gates of peace by victory.

Neither could I doubt that our German allies were in principle ready to consider peace. When, after the dramatic struggles of the opening campaign, the war had assumed a stationary character, Germany too perceived that the long duration of the war with which we had to reckon would more and more increase the original inequality of the combatants. The old picked troops of the Austro-Hungarian and German armies were becoming exhausted in the wars of attrition on all fronts and could not for long be replaced with material of the same quality, whereas the enemy could increase his resources by drawing upon the whole world. The result was that Austria-Hungary, and even the more powerful Germany, were in danger of exhaustion. Not even our brilliant military successes, which were really nothing but Pyrrhic victories, could deceive us on this point.

The recognition of this fact was associated with rather different sentiments in Austria-Hungary and in Germany.

In the monarchy any possibility of peace which would have left her possessions intact and provided the conditions for peaceful development would have been received with unqualified satisfaction. In this both governments and I myself were consciously in harmony with the general sentiment.

In Germany, too, the highest quarters recognised the necessity for keeping an untiring watch for any indications of a desire for peace on the part of the enemy. In

all my conversations and dealings with the Chancellor, our joint preoccupation with peace found expression. Together we searched the political horizon to see whether we could not see light anywhere. Bethmann's speeches and statements were generally framed in such a way as to indicate to the enemies his readiness for peace, though the enemy politicians themselves persistently talked of annihilation and revenge.

While the Chancellor's declarations that he would be satisfied with territorial integrity and security constituted, in the view of our enemies, a wholly inadequate basis for the introduction of peace discussions, they went much too far for the feelings of a great many Germans, and at times of the majority of German public opinion. The admiration roused by the magnificent achievements of the armies induced a firm belief in the victorious issue of the war, and encouraged the idea that the hard-won victory would yield big prizes.

This attitude, which was naturally encouraged in military circles, was an embarrassment to any pacific intentions in a government that could not lose sight of the fact that in this war the complete attainment, even of purely defensive objects, would constitute an enormous success. This therefore greatly added to the difficulties of Germany's peace efforts; but what added still further to these difficulties was the fact that Germany's attitude towards two of the principal war aims of the Entente was one of emphatic refusal. Germany was determined to retain Alsace-Lorraine, although these provinces were a comparatively recent acquisition of the Empire, whereas Austria-Hungary had offered to sacrifice possessions which she had held for centuries in Tirol and on the Isonzo. Moreover, whilst Germany had certainly stated that she did not wish to annex Belgium, she emphasised the necessity for adequate military and economic guarantees, and these, though

never clearly defined, aroused considerable distrust amongst the Entente by their very vagueness.

Germany was determined to make sure that Belgium could never again become the instrument of a policy of aggression by England or France. To attain this object would have been regarded as a valuable achievement. Meantime Germany herself was quite undecided as to the proper means to be adopted for this purpose. But in order that they should be practically effective, Germany would in the nature of the case have had to plan such schemes as would have left to Belgium a mere nominal independence, and would scarcely have been calculated to obtain the concurrence of the Entente, or to soften the hatred of the Belgians, who, at the mere suggestion of their incorporation with Germany or of being bound in any way, would have raised the cry that the existence of their country was at stake. Their problem was really as difficult as squaring the circle. The Germans themselves recognised the inadequacy of everything that was devised. Moreover, they had the disturbing knowledge that the fate of Belgium was the vital issue in the question of the future possibility of peace with England.

An actual offer of peace was for the time being out of the question. The leading statesmen of the Entente had, with the applause of their peoples, pledged themselves to the "destruction of militarism," the "liberation of all peoples," "the knock-out blow," and they were so confident of victory that they would merely have accorded an untimely peace move on our part a loud malicious rebuff, as being a sign of our weakness, after which we could not have exposed ourselves to such a rebuff again.

It was therefore impossible to do anything for the cause of peace through official channels and in the eyes of the general public, even though all peoples were already seized with the horror of the extent which

the world war had assumed. But one could not so easily give up the search for the sources of peace, which seemed so unattainable, and for which everyone longed. If there were the slightest prospect that public sentiment in the enemy countries should be less filled with hatred and less set upon destruction than the official public statements of leading personalities suggested, we would have to utilise this fact in some way, in order to build those bridges which might perhaps have led to reconciliation between the nations, before they destroyed one another in the pitiless conflict.

Both the Chancellor and I made every kind of attempt to get into touch in order to weave some thread of inter-communications and to make the mutual exchange of milder views possible. For this my position seemed somewhat more favourable than that of the Chancellor, for there was less hatred against Austria-Hungary than against the hereditary enemy, Germany. I tried to exploit this fact, but of course not at the expense of our allies. The neutrals, whose interest also suffered substantially from the war, and who were exposed to much unpleasantness, were the natural people to act as mediators between the combatants, and were quite prepared to do so. But in no war have the neutrals been so severely treated as in this one. Every attempt at mediation was declared in advance by our enemies to be "an unfriendly act," and every assistance to the Central Powers was most minutely controlled, and involved severe penalties.

Nevertheless most of the neutral states courageously defended their rights, even in our favour. Austria-Hungary owed them much that lessened the horrors of the inhuman blockade. Peace was a matter of great concern to the neutral states, and when they could they put out feelers through the heads of the states or through emissaries of distinction to see if the clouds were lifting

anywhere. But they had no success. Diplomats and private persons well known abroad made use of former relationships. Merchants made use of their business connections in order to establish friendly and confidential communications. Pacificists, scholars of international reputation, our own and the neutral Socialist parties, endeavoured to strike a note of fellowship with the enemy, but it was all in vain. Even where their call evoked a reply that was personally friendly, it was always pointed out that the persons of authority among the enemy were determined not to enter into negotiations.

We never failed to make such attempts as were possible, at suitable intervals as opportunity offered ; these, with a few superficial differences, had almost absurdly similar results. It will suffice to mention this one case.

In the spring of 1915 a neutral ruler sent an eminent person from his Court, who was also well known to the Emperor of Russia—the Danish Privy Councillor Andersen (the name of this person has since been published)—on a secret mission to St. Petersburg in order to feel the way as regards peace. The emissary was received with the greatest *empressement* by the Czar and his government, but it was pointed out that Russia was in the full stride of her successes and that therefore peace could not be considered ; but he might come again later. He did come again as early as the end of July of the same year. In the meantime the Russian armies, after heavy reverses, had been driven in rapid retreat out of Poland and Galicia. At the opening of the Duma of the 1st August, the government gave a gloomy picture of the military situation. Nevertheless even on this occasion the emissary did not find the slightest inclination to a peaceful understanding, not to mention a separate peace. He heard nothing but protestations of Russia's fidelity to her allies and of her fear of offending England. He found less hatred towards Germany than

the first time, and admiration of her military achievements. The reverses which Russia had suffered were not realised as decisive. The Czar himself expressed his confidence that an immediate autumn offensive, which was to be undertaken in conjunction with the British, would put everything right.

Our hopes of concluding the war on the basis of the territorial *status quo*, which we had successfully defended, had been considerably dashed in the course of our attempts to throw out feelers. The position, therefore, seemed more and more to call for the greatest energy in developing our military successes, while we waited to see whether and to what extent our enemies evinced a more conciliatory spirit.

While the obstinate nature of the campaign had increasingly embittered our enemies, it had not been without effect upon the feelings of the Central Powers, who were forced to consider not merely how to succeed in the difficult task of saving their possessions, but also how they could be secured for the future.

The question of such security was one of the subjects of my conversations with the Chancellor during August, and again in November 1915. Austria-Hungary was concerned principally with Serbia, which, without being destroyed, must be made harmless, if we were to have peace. After discussing the possibility of eliminating Serbia through a separate peace, we both came to the conclusion that Serbia was most unlikely to be willing to make peace, and moreover that the value of any separate peace that might possibly be concluded with that kingdom was highly problematic. She would always at heart cling to the hope of the final victory of the Entente. A peace concluded by Serbia for motives of expediency would be broken by Serbia as soon as a change in the general military position made it possible

Whether we made a separate peace or not, our own

intentions with regard to Serbia were to allow her to continue to exist, but to acquire certain bridge-heads at the frontier as a security against a recurrence of similar dangers. Such were our plans of annexation. The Entente may work up righteous indignation about Austria-Hungary, but before they cast stones at us they should first consider whether they do not feel guilty of having conceived similar plans, and such as cut far deeper into the living organisms of peoples, and actually carried them out in the peace treaties of Versailles, Saint-Germain, and Trianon.

In order to make peace possible, other conditions were therefore necessary which could only arise gradually and after a considerable interval.

The year 1916 in due course heralded the preparations for an enormous campaign in all the theatres of war. Italy directed violent attacks against our front and attempted to force a way to Trieste and into the monarchy. Germany went in for the dangerous undertaking at Verdun, for which her strength did not appear equal. In June Brusilov's offensive began, which involved the Austro-Hungarian army in a serious catastrophe and in a long series of battles. Germany's assistance at last succeeded in holding up this new Russian attack ; but as early as July the storm burst upon the German western front. The powerful and continuous English and French attacks involved the most difficult tasks for the German troops, and it was not until the beginning of October that the terrific attempt to break through between the Somme and the Ancre could be regarded as having failed. It was therefore no time for working for peace, as each side would feel that the decision should embody the results of the extreme efforts that were being made on all the battlefields.

But these battles, although they were so violent, or

perhaps for that very reason, were bound within measurable time to lead to a pause. I thought it probable that they would not lead to a decisive result, but would confirm the view that even afterwards one would merely be faced by an endless succession of further battles.

About the end of July 1916, when it became more obvious that all the fighting in the east and in the west would merely be a terrible episode in the desperate world drama, I became seized with the conviction that at the moment when the actual offensives had expended themselves without result, we, and especially Austria-Hungary, would be compelled openly to state under what conditions we and our allies were prepared to conclude peace. War discussions had fallen under the ban of doctrinaire phrases and the rhodomontade of hate, which disguised the real motives of the Powers concerned. I felt that the time had come to attempt to bring the angry spirits back to the region of reality by publicly ascertaining the war aims of the parties to the dispute, so that it could be made clear to the whole world whether anything that was essential to humanity, or to one nation, justified the continued slaughter. A general readiness for peace had no effect on our enemies. We had plenty of experience to teach us that. Unless by a miracle humanity were suddenly seized with profound horror of its violent madness, the only way by which we could hope to prevent the horrors of war from being prolonged indefinitely up to the point of exhaustion, and our only chance of destroying the legends which had been woven about the aims of the Central Powers, was to make a *concrete offer of peace* at the moment when our favourable position in the field would prevent the impression that the step was the result of military necessity. I felt that such a moment had come with the failure of the summer offensives in 1916; but the

Rumanian crisis again assumed a threatening character, and it appeared advisable for us first to devote ourselves entirely to dealing with this danger. At the end of August Rumania's determination for war caused us some weeks of anxiety. It was not until the backbone of the Rumanian attack was broken, and was followed by the rapid repulse of this enemy, that I thought it was possible again to take up the idea of a peace offer.

On the 28th September I first submitted it to the Emperor Francis Joseph.

My suggestion was received with the most sympathetic attention. The aged monarch, who always succeeded in subordinating his feeling to his sense of duty, gave a constant example during the war of quiet determination and selfless devotion to the cause of the just war for Austria-Hungary's existence, but it was indeed a hard fate which did not permit him to end his life in peace after it had been dedicated to peace. Even if the splitting up of the monarchy were really the solution of all difficulties which would give general satisfaction—and even our former enemies are not agreed on this point—it is only natural that the ruler who had grown grey in dealing with the most thorny internal crises should have firmly believed that the living principle of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, after successfully surviving the most shattering experience that it had ever undergone, would have enough vitality to assure its continued existence in a form suited to future conditions.

The only idea which now concerned the Emperor was to see the war ended without having to surrender anything affecting the vital interests of the states under his rule. He therefore gladly agreed to my suggestion, though without any illusions as to the probable result of the attempt, that we should arrive at an agreement with our allies, regarding an offer to be made to the enemy, containing the principal conditions of peace.

The monarch agreed with the view on which my proposal was based, that we could not affect the enemy's firm decision to continue the war until they should be in a position not to negotiate peace, but to dictate it ; but that such a state of mind was the resultant of various factors, and that it was considerably affected by popular sentiment which had been worked up against us by every possible means. Because in the end we could no longer tolerate continuous and unlimited provocation, we had been branded as disturbers of peace. At a stage of the war when we were in a favourable position we would demonstrate to the world that, as far as we were concerned, peace could be restored at any moment if our opponents were really concerned only with those principles which they had been proclaiming so loudly since the beginning of the war.

The Emperor authorised me, in accordance with my suggestion, first to get into touch with the Chancellor.

Lloyd George's outbreak of hate against Germany on the following day, 29th September 1916, in an interview which was by way of being a reply to a speech of the Chancellor of the day before, which had also attacked England pretty vigorously, was not a very good omen.

As a meeting with the Chancellor was urgently called for on political matters, I waited for it in order to introduce the question of peace. On the 18th October I was at Pless, and after dealing with the other subject of discussion, I was able thoroughly to go into our position in the war with Bethmann-Hollweg, during a few quiet evening hours.

I reminded him of the difficult economic position in which the Central Powers were placed, as a result of being cut off from the whole of the rest of the world, of the prospect of further heavy fighting in the following spring which, even if it went in our favour, would not offer any prospect of finality, and of the desire for peace

which certainly animated us, and could be assumed to exist, to a certain extent at any rate, among our enemies. In this connection I put it to him that we might both consider whether the time had not come to attempt a peace offer which, in view of the signs of weariness apparent in the enemy camp too, might conceivably be seriously examined and, if the worst came to the worst, could not do any harm, and would demonstrate to the world that it was much against our will that we were forced to continue fighting without any prospect.

Our procedure should be to communicate our unassuming peace proposals, corresponding to the military position, to our enemies through the neutrals, and simultaneously to publish them. The object of this would be to enlighten our own peoples in the most convenient way as to the objects for which they had to fight, and to deprive the enemy governments of any excuse for continuing their usual recriminations, and also to demonstrate to the enemy peoples that they were carrying on the war against imaginary dangers, which they had been deluded into fearing by their governments, except in so far as their own aims of conquest had brought them into it.

The Chancellor had followed my train of thought with warm interest and took it up with enthusiasm. He emphasised that he too was constantly preoccupied with the peace question, and that he would never be willing to let opportunities for peace slip by on account of such war aims as did not represent vital interests of Germany. He did not merely approve of my suggestion in principle, but also in a general way of the separate points, as I communicated them to him in a preliminary draft. He admitted that Germany's position, too, was such as to compel one to consider the matter. For the present he could merely express his personal opinion, but he would think the matter over and lay it before

his sovereign. As soon as he could define his position he would let me know.

On the 29th October the ambassador, von Stumm, came to Vienna on the instructions of Bethmann-Hollweg, in order to inform me that, after mature consideration, and with the authority of the Emperor William, the Chancellor accepted my suggestion and wished to carry it out as soon as possible, but subject to an important modification, in that no concrete peace conditions should be mentioned.

The Chancellor therefore proposed immediately to proclaim the independence of Poland, which had already been decided upon, and in the course of the week to transmit a Note to our enemies, stating our readiness to negotiate for peace. The Chancellor also intended in his next speech in the Reichstag to deliver a kind of commentary on the Notes in connection with recent speeches of English ministers.

I will not go into closer details here regarding the individual points of the procedure proposed by the Chancellor, as to the modification of which we easily reached agreement later on. But I should like openly to discuss our difference of opinion regarding the essential question of the manner in which our peace points were to be communicated, with the respect due to the different opinion of an ally and with the conviction which I still entertain to-day, that in this difficult problem of war psychology, in which there was a good deal to be said on both sides, either view might be fully justified. I regard mine as offering greater prospects of success.

Bethmann was opposed to mentioning and enumerating clearly defined peace terms, out of regard for German public opinion, in which diagonally opposite views regarding war aims prevailed, which, in the interests of peace itself, should not be prematurely forced into a set mould. I was naturally unable to offer an opinion

on this point ; but the Chancellor's misgivings were to a large extent connected with tactics of the negotiations. If one stated one's own conditions before making certain that the other side would accept the proposal to negotiate at all, one would, in the Chancellor's view, have committed oneself to certain definite and indeed modest propositions, perhaps even have implied certain concessions so that the other side would start at a great advantage, as they would now be certain of these concessions, in advance, without necessarily having to give anything in return, and would have the advantage in pressing their own claims or be in a position to give them up only in return for further concessions. It would not be very easy to go back upon admissions that had been publicly made.

These were more or less the reasons on which the Chancellor founded his objections.

I was fully aware of the risk that the enemy would attempt to use the publication of our peace proposals to our tactical disadvantage when it came to negotiation. But, apart from the fact that I would have regarded it as a substantial gain to have arrived at discussions at all, I held that we could avoid any disadvantage from the publication of our peace terms, provided we definitely limited ourselves to them and did not attempt to discuss our claims or to put too wide a construction on them. We could not overlook the fact that, in view of the growing resources of our opponents, and the fact that we had only our own means to fall back upon, we ought to take thought before making an offer that would draw seriously upon our peace prospects. But, in the nature of things, the proposals which we put forward could only be conditional ; they could only hold good if the other side were prepared to arrive at an understanding on the same basis, and would not demand anything that was incompatible with our honour, our existence, and

our freedom of development, as expressed in our Note. We could only make concessions if the demands of the enemy were not unreasonable.

If they put forward claims which were unrealisable, our proposals would fail, and could bind us neither morally nor by the law of nations. They would not avail against us, and the only effect would be the least that we had hoped to achieve by this step—namely, to demonstrate that we would welcome a new order of things, based on conciliation that would do justice, not only to our own interests, but also to the essence of the great principles which we were supposed to be opposing, and as the protagonists of which the Entente was uniting the world against us.

I was therefore unable to accept the view that the points contained in our peace proposals, whether stated publicly or merely to the enemy, would amount to irrevocable admissions, whatever the attitude taken by the other side. In my opinion, if an offer were allowed to go forward without any concrete proposals, there would be the risk that, if it were refused, it would leave no mark behind.

On the 30th October I requested the ambassador, von Stumm, to convey my reply to the Chancellor, and to express my gratitude that he had in general adopted my suggestion. Only I felt bound to deplore the fact that he declined to communicate our peace conditions in a concrete form and thus to sacrifice the favourable effect which would be produced in all quarters when these conditions became known. If he insisted upon it, I would take his objection into account and consider further the best way to approach the problem. I recommended certain modifications to the course of procedure proposed by Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg.

The immediate transmission of the Note would be regarded by our enemies as a request for peace. If

the Central Powers could forward a proposal to enter into peace negotiations, without indicating any concrete basis for them, immediately after the British ministers had arrogantly proclaimed their known attitude and their determination to carry on the war to final victory, this could not fail to give our enemies the impression that we admitted their point of view, to confirm them in their opinion as to the difficulties of our position, and to convince them that we had reached the limit of our power of resistance. The effect would be to confirm their decision completely to worst us; at best it would produce an invitation to send plenipotentiaries in order that our proposals might be heard, and these would have little prospect of being accepted unless they were as modest as befits those of one begging for peace.

Another reason why I thought a short delay desirable was the fact that the proclamation of Poland's fate was about due. I thought it would considerably damage its effect and, in fact, make it seem scarcely intelligible, if the two actions were taken more or less simultaneously. The proclamation of Poland's independence would require a certain amount of time to become generally known in its full extent. A peace Note, following immediately upon it, would confuse impressions, and it would have been impossible for Russia, who was most directly affected in the matter, immediately afterwards to meet us in the conference room. After a certain interval Russia might have overcome her first indignation at the *fait accompli*.

Moreover, it would be physically impossible so quickly to effect the indispensable agreement with our other allies. We would have to prepare them for the idea, and also discuss with them the essential peace conditions, because, although these were not to be published, the basis of them must be fixed when we declared our readi-

ness to negotiate. We should be asked to state our conditions, and we would have no occasion for demanding that our enemies should first state theirs.

I therefore proposed to the Chancellor that he should take the opportunity of his speech to the Reichstag to express the readiness of our alliance for peace, and perhaps indicate that we should not delay to give this desire practical expression. I would forthwith proceed to find an opportunity in a further discussion with the Chancellor to arrive at the most practical method for carrying out my idea, having incorporated the amendment which he proposed ; and to this end I was working out a fresh proposal.

No appreciable delay would be involved ; there would be a suitable interval after the proclamation of the kingdom of Poland, and the impression of undue haste would be avoided.

This was the gist of my reply to the Chancellor.

Keenly though I deplored my failure to carry one of the main points of my proposal to the Chancellor, I attached great importance to the realisation of as much of the basic idea—which had now also been accepted in Berlin—as would be possible in the agreement which still remained to be concluded with the German government, and this, not only for the reasons mentioned, but also out of regard to the present and future attitude of the neutral countries to the war. The neutrals no doubt derived certain economic advantages from it ; but these were far outweighed by the inevitable results of the state of war beyond their frontiers, accentuated as these were by the policy of the enemy. Uncertainty, limitations of every kind, regulations severely controlling trade and communications, and the necessity for taking protective military measures themselves, made the world war a painful reality even to those countries which were spared the actual fighting. To a certain extent America,

being distant from the theatres of war, constituted an exception. But she too found her whole political and economic life intensely affected by the events in Europe.

It was therefore natural to regard the block of neutral states, at the head of whom stood the most powerful of them—the United States of America—as natural allies in the idea of peace. Whilst the uncompromising attitude of the Entente ruled out any effort at mediation in which both sides did not take the initiative, we could in general count on their welcoming any suitable opportunity for advancing the cause of peace.

In this connection the United States occupied a special position, not only by virtue of their great powers, but also through the personal position of their eminent President. Woodrow Wilson was, from the start, a factor of weight in the war, since his attitude was of the first importance to each of the belligerent countries. Though, in sympathy with the public opinion of his country, his feelings were entirely on the side of the Entente, he always described the war as a great misfortune for the world, and it was in keeping with his philosophical bent that he should try to think out means for restoring peace and inaugurating a new order of things which should more effectively guarantee peace for the world, while he displayed the noble ambition of bringing all the prestige of the great power behind him effectively to bear on the salvation of the world from its grievous distress.

Wilson's desire to promote peace appeared to grow stronger as the date for the presidential election approached. His election campaign was conducted on the platform of world peace, and the world eagerly followed his public statement. It was certainly not concern for the fate of the Central Powers that moved him. His prejudice against them, especially against Germany, had increased all the time. The arguments in connection

with the various U-boat protests (the sinking of the *Lusitania*, *Arabic*, *Ancona*, *Perthshire*, *Sussex*) and the American interpretation of neutrality had clearly shown this. He did not wish to see the power of England and the Entente lessened, and he conceived the idea of the League of Nations as an institution for securing the peace of the world.

The Chancellor, too, took into account Wilson's belief in his calling as a peacemaker. We know from the memoirs of the American ambassador in Berlin, Gerard, that Bethmann constantly urged him to induce the President, in view of his well-known opinions, to intercede in the cause of peace; and accordingly the ambassador was moved on the occasion of a visit to America in the spring of 1916 to inform the President of Bethmann's suggestions.

We know from the Secretary of State Helffrich's work on the world war that at the beginning of September the Chancellor telegraphed to the German ambassador at Washington to ask him for his personal opinion of Wilson as a peace mediator. Count Bernstorff replied that nothing could be expected of Wilson before the Presidential election, which was to take place at the beginning of September. If he were re-elected, as seemed probable, he would no doubt set about mediating, as he appeared to be convinced that neither of the contending groups of Powers would be completely reduced.

The Presidential election passed, and there was not the slightest indication that the newly elected President was contemplating an early peace move. We also learn from Gerard's book that he returned to his post at the beginning of December with the impression that Wilson wished "to preserve peace and to make peace"; but he brought no invitations to the German government to make a peace move.

Neither we nor Germany could allow the peace offer,

which we regarded as right and opportune, to be dependent upon Wilson making up his mind to take the step upon which he was pondering. There was also no point in requesting his direct mediation or in sending our intended offer in the form of a request for mediation, for if he had any serious intention at all we did not wish to compromise the President in the spontaneity of his action. If he acted at the request of one side, he exposed himself to the reply which the other side had ready for neutrals, that they desired no interference and would regard any such step as an unfriendly act. On the other hand, if he had anything more in mind than merely the wish for peace, we could give Wilson an opportunity to use the full weight of his influence in its support.

The proclamation which we had in mind seemed to me to be well adapted to this purpose. The peace offer of the Central Powers could be transmitted to him as well as to other neutrals, to be forwarded to our enemies. He would be free to put such force and conviction into his covering Note as would correspond with his wish to take an active part in promoting peace.

American mediation was at that time certainly not popular in Germany. Her partiality for the Entente, which grew more and more marked, the mass production of war material by the United States for our enemies, her succession of sharp protests and threats regarding the U-boat campaign, her one-sided severity towards the Central Powers on account of their alleged breaches of international law, coupled with an infinite forbearance with our enemies, had aroused in Germany a feeling against America which produced scepticism as to the usefulness of Wilson's intervention.

But if he actually took the step, either spontaneously or in connection with our peace move, it would, in spite of everything, have been not only acceptable to the government in Germany, but generally popular, because

in that case Wilson would have been working for the whole world and for the welfare of all peoples.

If there was no real ground for hoping for this, it was at any rate a possible result of our peace move, and made it desirable from this point of view as from so many others.

The discussions as to the details of the step which we were contemplating took place in Berlin in November 1916. Before going there I had informed the German government, through their ambassador Prince Hohenlohe, that in view of their misgivings I was dropping my original intention to communicate our minimum conditions to the enemy at the same time that we invited them to enter into negotiations, and that I was prepared to accept the Note as it had been drafted, subject to the modification that, by expressing our readiness to enter into negotiations, we should state in the Note that we would bring our peace terms to the conference table. The Germans accepted this condition.

The principal object of the discussions, in which the ambassadors Prince Hohenlohe and von Mérey, as well as the Chancellor, von Jagow, the Secretary of State, and Dr. Zimmermann, the Under-Secretary of State, took part, was to arrive at a definition of our joint peace conditions. Moreover, we had to settle the terms of the Note to be addressed to the states entrusted with the protection of our interests in the enemy countries, regarding the transmission of our offer to the enemy.

At the beginning of the first session I had the peace points read which had already been drafted by the German Government and myself. In my opening remarks I laid stress on the fact that it was only with the greatest regret and out of deference to the Chancellor's misgivings that I had dropped my original intention of communicating our conditions immediately to the enemy Powers as a basis for negotiations. I felt that the

effect that our action would have upon public opinion in the enemy countries would thereby largely be lost. The impression upon neutrals also, to which I attached great importance, would, in my opinion, be less effective if we did not state any conditions. Nevertheless I expected that, in view of the keen desire of the neutral states to see the war speedily ended, the step which we had taken with this object would be popular with them. Possibly as a result of our action the neutrals would form an association with a view to bringing peace about.

Our step would no doubt produce the best impression with our own peoples, since the desire for peace was universal and all sections of the population were keenly anxious that the responsible quarters should take some practical steps in order to bring the war to an end.

Before proceeding to carry out any such action, the allied Powers must arrive at complete agreement as to the peace conditions to be put forward.

I then proceeded to take, one by one, our joint and several conditions as they were elaborated in a draft, explaining those affecting ourselves in greater detail. I called attention to the fact that the Austro-Hungarian demands fell into two groups, the first of which concerned such vital interests that we would have to insist upon their absolute acceptance, whereas the second group gave scope for negotiations, and we need not make the termination of the war conditional upon their acceptance. To the first group appertained the restoration of the territorial integrity of the monarchy and the security of our position in the Adriatic, which was, as I emphasised, a German question too, whereas the demands for frontier adjustments did not in all their details represent such vital interests that we should have been forced to continue the war, if the negotiations with the enemy Powers should not meet with absolute success in this matter.

In discussing the German demands, I was at pains frankly to persuade the German statesmen in a friendly spirit and with the consciousness of our obligations as an ally, that some of their conditions, more particularly those affecting France and Belgium, had a very wide scope and seemed to me to be scarcely realisable.

In this connection I gathered from the Chancellor and the two representatives of the German Foreign Office that they were not unduly optimistic as to the possibilities, but that they were guided by the desire to keep in their hands as much scope as possible for negotiating, and they therefore also argued against the idea of defining their offer to the enemy as yet.

Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg emphasised that he was most anxious to define the main lines of our peace conditions as between ourselves, but he did not think that the time had yet come for setting out an absolutely detailed statement of claims, the possibility of achieving which could only be revealed in the course of negotiations. He repeated the familiar objection, that the premature publication of our conditions would commit us to a definite programme.

This was a difference between the two views, both of which were no doubt equally justified. We both wanted a peace by understanding. It was therefore, in my view, desirable in the nature of the case that we should carefully consider what we should give up as being only attainable in a victorious peace. If we wished to achieve our object, we must not put forward points which we might know in advance that the enemy would not even discuss, whether they were introduced in the Peace Note at the commencement of negotiations, or only later when these were in full swing. A peace by understanding, without sacrifices, was unthinkable; but, in my opinion, such sacrifices were most likely to assist us effectively if they were clearly stated at the earliest

stage, as a spontaneous indication of our peaceful intentions.

We would only be committed to our peace points if, as we hoped, the enemy were prepared to meet us. Each point, therefore, however precisely it might be stated, remained conditional and not binding. Vague declarations, on the other hand—I took for example the Belgian question—would have made little impression and would certainly have been met with the request for more precise details.

If we were unable or unwilling to make up our minds to such sacrifices, our peace step, deprived of substance, would have far less prospect of success, even though it might amount to an impressive public statement of peaceful desires.

A fresh draft of the Note, to be sent to the representatives of our interests in enemy countries, was made, which in general took into account my suggested modifications. The Germans again raised the question whether the sentence stating that we would “bring our conditions to the conference table” should not be omitted. I insisted upon this sentence, which I considered vital, and in the end it was accepted. The Note was now in the form in which it was approved by our other allies and was eventually sent out.

With regard to our procedure in the case of Bulgaria and Turkey, after a brief discussion as to whether we should present short peace proposals to the enemy, or whether it should not be left to each of the allied Powers individually to state their desires at the negotiations, it was decided to transmit the text of our draft Note to Bulgaria and Turkey for their approval, adding that we had set out our conditions independently and *pro foro interno*, and now invited our allies also to communicate their wishes to us, so that we might take them into account in evolving a joint peace programme.

On the 18th November I reported to the Emperor Francis Joseph the result of the discussions in Berlin. It was the last occasion on which it was my duty to appear before the aged monarch. The Emperor showed traces of his last illness, but was energetically engaged in his usual work, and expressed his keen satisfaction at the prospect of peace being discussed at all. It was a gleam of hope for his last days that the end of a war which was a grievous affliction to him was perhaps not so far distant.

On the 21st November the Emperor Francis Joseph passed away. It was fortunate for him that he did not live to see what the near future had in store.

Having completed a long career in his service and that of my country, which for me were one and the same thing, I will not expatiate on my unbounded veneration for the memory of the departed monarch, in personal contact with whom I had the privilege of working for a number of years, a witness of the enlightened wisdom, the political sagacity, the adaptability, the high sense of duty, and the nobility of soul of this exceptional ruler. History alone can pass adequate judgment upon him, taking into account the compelling force of circumstances which limited his power of action. The Emperor never used his influence to oppose any progress or development ; he had not flinched from allowing the hard school of experience to develop his insight into the needs of the time ; nevertheless he had reached the conviction that with competent leadership his states could achieve all that the present required along the lines of natural development, through the evolution of existing institutions. The sovereign never hindered the co-operation of the responsible quarters to this end ; he did everything to encourage it. Such obstacles as there were emanated from these quarters themselves, as without their agreement the solution of the great organic

problems was impossible. The best-meant attempts were often rendered futile by an obstinate attachment to meaningless forms, fear of the consequences of departing from tradition, the tardy recognition of what had become inevitable, and a slack spirit of *laissez-faire*. The times required foresight and alertness. Their signs were often not recognised.

The Emperor was not under any delusions as to the critical nature of the internal problems of the monarchy; but he rated the cohesive force of the dynasty higher than circumstances warranted.

The Emperor Francis Joseph often had a clearer insight into the real state of affairs than the ministers and the parties. He never concealed what he felt; but he always remained within the confines of his constitutional powers, and as long as he did not think that the foundations of the empire, of which he felt himself the appointed protector, were being undermined, he did not force his point of view upon anybody, and least of all upon the ministers who were acting under their parliamentary responsibility. They indeed helped often, but not often enough to reconcile differences.

After the change of government, the internal problems of the monarchy all reached a critical stage at the same time in the hothouse atmosphere of the war, and when the military catastrophe came there was a general explosion.

Instead of evolution we had revolution. The former might have given us reconstruction without destruction. What came was destruction, but the work of reconstruction in all parts of the former Austro-Hungarian monarchy remains as a task for the state to tackle, and a problem that has not been solved by the newly created states.

The new sovereign, who, when heir to the throne, had

already shown keen interest in the peace move, told me as early as the 25th November that he did not wish that our actions should be delayed any longer. I was able to report that everything was ready, but that I concurred in the Chancellor's opinion that we should select a moment calculated to make it clear to the outside world also that our offer was prompted not by weakness but by the desire for peace. Rumania's army had been conquered ; we were just about to enter Bukarest. The Emperor William too, who had come to Vienna on the 28th November 1916 to offer a prayer at the bier of the deceased Emperor, wished to wait for this moment.

Bukarest fell on the 6th December.

On the 7th December the final form of the Note from the four allies was settled.

The Note was short and simple. It implied a feeling of confidence which was certainly shaken by developments in the near future ; it described the war situation from the point of view that was justified at the time, and as it must have appeared to anybody who was not permeated with the desire to annihilate. That was the crux of the matter. If our enemies were still dominated by this feeling, as we had reason to fear, then this and any other step would be in vain. But before assuming responsibility for continuing the war we had to try any avenue that offered the smallest prospect. Finally, there was the hope that America wished for peace, America who alone had the power to exert an outside influence on the course of events.

On the 12th December the Note was handed to the representatives in Vienna of the Powers who had charge of Austria-Hungary's interests in the enemy countries, the United States, Spain, and Holland, for transmission to the enemy governments. An appeal was sent to the Pope through the Nuncio to support our action.

The Note was sent to the other neutral states for their information.

The effect of our step at home was quite definitely good. The public appreciated the position; nobody was unduly sanguine as to the possible result, but the general feeling was that an attempt had been made which could not have been omitted.

I had already set out the above statement regarding the origins of our peace move of 12th December when the former Chancellor, von Bethmann-Hollweg, appeared before the parliamentary sub-committee of the Lower House in order to give further information on the matter. His important and detailed *exposé* gives me no occasion to alter any word in what I have written.

On the other hand, it is necessary to explain why, in preparing for our move, we made no reference to any definitely expressed intention of Wilson's to issue a peace appeal, as the German Chancellor did. I would like to emphasise that I attached less importance than Bethmann-Hollweg to the distinction indicated in his statement of the 31st October 1919: "Where it is stated in the documents that a peace intervention of Wilson was not desired, this refers only to an intervention in the ordinary sense of the word, that is to say an intervention implying a share in the actual drafting of the peace terms; but that kind of activity which I would describe by the expression *peace move* is not meant." I believe that in either case Wilson would have claimed a share in the actual drafting of the terms. That was only to be expected in view of his dominating position in the world conflict.

On the first occasion on which we exchanged views regarding the peace offer, Bethmann-Hollweg and I took into account only the well-known general ambition of the President of the United States to be the chosen

instrument for restoring peace to the world. We did not contemplate in any way directing our efforts at him especially; he was only formally concerned, as all the other neutrals were who had undertaken the charge of the interests of the combatant countries.

We certainly could not wait indefinitely until he should be moved to give expression to his desire to be a peacemaker. If Wilson had concrete intentions unknown to us, a move on our part could not prejudice them, and might even give him the opportunity he wanted to put them into effect.

That, at any rate, was how I viewed the matter. That the Chancellor himself had made peace moves was not known to me; he had not so much as hinted at it. Bethmann-Hollweg expressly admitted this in theory in the following statement: "I would emphasise that it is not customary to keep even an ally so precisely informed of our procedure in carrying out our intentions. It seems to me that after our conversations it must have been quite clear to Burián that a peace appeal from Wilson was regarded by me as desirable in German interests. To attain peace was my object."

If I had known of it at the time I should certainly not have concurred in this point of view; for it is undoubtedly proper to give an ally precise information as to what is being done in the joint cause. It was quite clear to me that Bethmann-Hollweg desired Wilson to make an appeal for peace, just as I did; I should not have been left in ignorance of the fact that, at the time when I was discussing our step with him, the Chancellor had already instructed Count Bernstorff to induce Wilson to make such an appeal. It could not be contended that the seasonableness, the form, and content of our action would be unaffected by a simultaneous invitation to Wilson himself to come forward with peace proposals.

Bethmann-Hollweg's remark "Burián was not inclined to welcome Wilson's efforts on account of the latter's undisguised preference for the Entente" must be attributable to a fault of memory, since, in my view, Wilson alone had the position and the personality to be able to make an effective appeal for peace. This was not unknown to Bethmann-Hollweg. He actually says later on—it almost reads as though it were by way of amendment to the sentence quoted above: "I was nevertheless of the opinion that an appeal for peace by Wilson could not but be acceptable to us, and Burián never contested this."

In discussing the peace conditions, in the parliamentary committee, which we were contemplating in December 1916, Bethmann-Hollweg observed: "I have regarded Austria's war aims as grossly excessive and impossible. Their theoretical character is self-evident." Until he made the statement I had no idea that this was the Chancellor's opinion. He can scarcely have hinted it to me, as it would have been easy to refute it by reference to our actual aims, and it could not have borne a comparison with the German conditions. As I have already stated, I wanted to send in concrete proposals with our offer, and it may therefore be assumed that I should only have put forward such points as had some prospect of being regarded as open to discussion, not merely by our ally but also by the enemy. Only it must be borne in mind that at that time we were far from being beaten, and we had therefore every reason to hope for a peace by understanding such as we were sincerely striving for. Moreover, we should not have endeavoured to secure any annexations for the purpose of increasing our territory, but merely to effect such insignificant adjustments of our frontiers as were necessary to secure us against the attacks to which we had been exposed during the war. This applied to the Rus-

sian, Rumanian, Serbian, and Italian boundaries. Our conditions therefore were of a purely practical, and not, as Bethmann-Hollweg remarks, of a theoretical nature. If Germany, as he again observes, refused "to associate peace conditions with our peace offer," this was not because the Chancellor himself regarded the German conditions as milder than our own.

However that may be, the failure to mention concrete conditions was one of the reasons specifically alleged in all the enemy circles for refusing to meet us.

Wilson's peace Note of 18th December 1916, which, as Bethmann-Hollweg himself pointed out, was already written in November, assumes, as a matter of course, the communication of our peace conditions as well as those of the enemy, as I shall have occasion to mention later on in discussing the Note. This shows that in proposing to put forward concrete conditions I was on the right lines.

Our peace offer of 12th December and Wilson's Note of 18th December crossed and arose out of the same idea. If Wilson in his Note, which, as I have mentioned, was drafted a month before it was sent out, refers to our move, of which he was already informed, he does so in order to emphasise the fact that both steps were taken quite independently. Our move was therefore made at the right moment psychologically, and I entirely agree with Bethmann-Hollweg that "our peace offer neither restrained the President from his peace move nor influenced it."

Our peace move and Wilson's appeal, which was inspired by true humanity and political wisdom, proved unsuccessful. The blight of the Entente's Note of 10th January 1917, a document of blind hatred, settled upon it. The unrestricted U-boat war, which was soon after introduced, for a long time excluded America from any peace activities, and caused her to join our enemies.

And yet that cry of humanity's tortured conscience was not thereby eliminated. Our enemies had determined upon a war of annihilation. What our alliance and Wilson too had wished to avoid, happened. He had said almost prophetically in his Note : " If the contest must continue until the one group of belligerents or the other is exhausted ; if millions after millions of human lives must continue to be offered up, until on the one side or the other there are no more to offer ; if resentments must be kindled that can never cool, and despairs engendered from which there can be no recovery, hopes of peace and of the willing concert of free peoples will be rendered vain and idle."

And what have victory and enforced peace treaties actually brought to the victors and the vanquished ? Anything but real peace ; no solutions of any problems. Every decision that has been taken has given rise to new problems, which will not permit the world to settle down and which bear in them the seed of inevitable fresh conflicts. Our enemies—I leave out of account those whose undisguised aim was booty—have been unfaithful to the principles they have proclaimed, and Wilson has let these things happen. His will was weaker than his intelligence, and yet what he clearly saw and stated as a principle remains true, even though he did not follow it out, or applied it wrongly as a result of his notorious ignorance of the questions which he felt called upon to decide. Moreover, as soon as he had delivered the Entente from danger, he was no longer listened to. He had served his purpose and was of no further use.

Wilson's Note of December, and his later enunciation of points, might have brought real peace to a world which will now be tortured until it can free itself from the terrible bonds of the cruel and senseless penal decrees of Versailles, Saint-Germain, and Trianon.

In order to illustrate the undesirable situations that may arise through applying Bethmann-Hollweg's theory of what is due as between allies, I should like now to anticipate somewhat, and mention the procedure adopted by Germany in concluding the supplementary treaties with Russia of the 27th August 1918.

The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk brought about a state of peace between Austria-Hungary, Germany, and Russia, giving both the Central Powers not only common rights but also common powers for enforcing them. This machinery was not meant to be used by one party for achieving his own ends without regard to the similar rights of his ally. But that is what happened. In the summer of 1918 Germany began negotiations with the Soviet Government of which we were not informed, although it was a question of settling important political and economic questions connected with the peace treaty, which concerned Austria-Hungary as closely as they did Germany. Yet when I heard of these negotiations and asked for information, I received an evasive reply. Indeed, when, later on, having learnt the terms of the supplementary agreements which had been drafted, I expressed my misgivings and repeated them through our ambassador immediately before they were to be signed, Berlin merely replied with a few empty phrases.

I was and am far from wishing to criticise these treaties from the point of view of German interests. This has been done exhaustively by the parties concerned. In his book on the world war, Helfferich, the Secretary of State, calls the supplementary treaties, the conclusion of which he used his official position as far as possible to oppose, an "exaggeration of the Brest peace, an irresponsible challenge to fate at a time when developments in the west urgently called for restraint and moderation in one's aims." His principal reproach, however, against

the authors of the supplementary treaties is that they confirmed the Soviet régime in Russia, and that through their "way of dealing with the Soviet people" they had sacrificed the interests of German citizens in Russia in order to make the Soviet government amenable to their political and financial schemes. Helfferich sums up his opinion in the sentence: "German diplomacy obstinately refused to appreciate the position and helped Bolshevism through its most difficult crisis." He pointed out with emphasis the double disadvantage that, for the sake of the supplementary treaties, Germany had increased the danger of Bolshevism within her own dominions and at the same time had seriously compromised her relations with her allies.

I regarded these arguments as damaging to our joint interests, as well as from the purely Austro-Hungarian point of view, because they contained territorial clauses which would necessarily constitute an obstacle to peace. Unless utterly defeated, the Entente would never have agreed to Esthonia and Livonia being attached to Germany. Russia would never have been permanently reconciled to the loss of her Baltic sea-coast up to the gates of Petersburg. The clauses affecting Caucasia, apart from giving Germany a preponderating influence in Georgia, gave Russia the guarantee as regards the rest of the Caucasian territory that Germany would support "no third Power" in military operations. This was aimed directly at our Turkish ally, and was bound to cause dissatisfaction in that country.

The agreement contained in the finance treaty to allow the whole Russian indemnity to be settled at a fixed inclusive sum of 6,000,000,000 marks, a considerable amount to be payable in gold, was certainly sensible; but this point especially called for joint action with Austria-Hungary, in order that she might have her due share in this exclusive payment, which avoided all the

numerous indefinite negotiations regarding the claims to be liquidated. Austria-Hungary, who expected to see her interests preserved through the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, was forced into the background ; her warnings against extravagant political schemes would have been vain and she might as well have whistled so far as her own legitimate claims were concerned. In the collapse the supplementary treaties disappeared, together with the main peace treaty ; but they remain as an eloquent testimony to the difficulty of carrying on an alliance subject to the reservation mentioned by Bethmann and, as this example shows, practised by his successors.

Ten days after this peace move I left the Foreign Office. Up to the time of my resignation no official reply had been received from the other side, but the first officially inspired statements regarding our Note were unfavourable. It was not yet possible to estimate the effect upon enemy public opinion ; but very soon the tendency became apparent to regard our offer as a sign of weakness. It was easy to see, from the tone of the enemy press, how much our action had lost in its effect through the failure to mention any terms. The suspicion kept on cropping up that Germany would claim French territory. Yet in the chorus of refusals there were moderate voices which advised that the peace offer should not be rejected, but that the Quadruple Alliance should be requested to put forward their conditions.

The Entente Governments proceeded to confer as to the answer to be given us. From an eminent neutral source we received a hint that the Entente would probably consider our offer if we would give more detailed information regarding our "basis."

Much though I had desired the conclusion of our conditions in the peace Note, I now agreed with the

view of the Chancellor, as communicated to me by the new German ambassador, Count Wedel, that now, having delivered our Note, we could not agree to the one-sided publication of our conditions. To have attached definite peace conditions to our proposal would have been a mark of self-confidence and frankness. Now we could state our conditions only if at the same time the enemy confidentially communicated theirs. We must seek to make it possible that they could, but I emphasised the necessity of drafting any replies we might send very cautiously but in a conciliatory form. There was, however, no opportunity for making such a reply.

On the 13th December the French Prime Minister, Briand, made a statement in the Chamber, refusing our proposal.

On the 18th December Sonnino and Lloyd George rejected our proposal in speeches in their respective parliaments.

On the 17th December we received the news of its summary rejection in a speech by the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Pokrovsky.

The guiding motive in all these replies was to regard our step as a snare and a manœuvre. They were dictated by the unanimous wish to continue fighting in order to enable "justice" to triumph. Inasmuch as they failed to find any concrete proposal in our Note, they went off into tediously similar generalities and accusations.

"In its essence," says Pokrovsky, "the German proposal contains no actual statement as to the nature of the peace that is to be considered."

Sonnino points out that: "In the Note of the four enemy Powers they show a complete absence of any statement of conditions and of any basis of negotiations. It contains no proposition except the general proposal to open negotiations."

Lloyd George asks: "What are their proposals? There are none. To enter a conference at Germany's invitation, . . . without any knowledge of the proposals that Germany is going to make, would be to put our heads into a noose, the ends of which are in Germany's hands."

My last official act in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was to receive from the ambassador, Penfield, President Wilson's peace Note of 18th December 1916.

This Note was an important consequence of our peace move. The President emphatically states that he had already been considering his proposal for a long time, and that he had not been in any way influenced by the peace proposals of the Central Powers which had just been made, that he had in fact been tempted to postpone his own action until the step taken by the Central Powers should have been replied to independently, as otherwise it might be thought that he had been influenced by a desire to play an active rôle on this occasion. This statement is beyond dispute, and it was just the independence of thought that suffering humanity expected of him. Nevertheless our step had the highly desirable effect upon him that, as he stated in his Note, he was conscious of the fact that his proposal came at a timely moment, and could best be examined in connection with other proposals destined to serve the same purpose. The Note in a masterly manner gave expression to all that we had been feeling most deeply. It was essential that it should proceed from a powerful independent quarter, as an urgent appeal to all the combatants to set out on the right road for ending the terrible catastrophe of the war, before irreparable treasures of civilisation had been destroyed. Humanity would have been spared much suffering and would have achieved a better peace if Wilson had then been listened to, and

at a later time if Wilson himself had remained more true to his own enlightened ideas when he was called upon and had the power to give effect to them.

In his Note the President of the United States expressly approaches us "in a friendly spirit," not only as a friend but as a neutral too whose chief concern is the speedy end of the war. The gist of Wilson's proposal is "that an early occasion be sought to evoke from all the nations at war such an avowal of their respective views as to the terms upon which the war might be concluded, and the arrangements which would be deemed satisfactory as a guarantee against its renewal or the outbreak of any similar conflict in the future." Wilson gave no definite advice as to the means and method for treating the matter on its deserts. All that was wanted was an opportunity "frankly to compare the conflicting points of view." In a word, Wilson proposed that both the contending parties should publish their peace conditions. And as no such conditions were contained in our peace offer, this was the only way which could lead to the achievement of our aim. The President drew attention to the important fact that the aim, or rather the aims, which in their main features had been made known by both sides to their own peoples and to the world, were in their essentials identical. Each side wished that the rights of peoples and states, both small and great, should be secured in the future, and also to assure their own security. Each side was prepared to form a league of nations for this purpose. President Wilson recognised as a necessary condition of such a league that "each determines it necessary first to settle the crises of the present war upon terms which will certainly safeguard the independence, the territorial integrity, and the political and commercial freedom of the nation involved."

The President lays especial stress upon the vital and

direct interest of the United States in the speedy termination of the war, and in the measures to be taken to secure the peace of the world in the future.

In his Note Wilson describes such a "comparison of views" as very urgent, and utters the memorable and almost prophetic words: "If the contest must continue to proceed towards undefined ends by slow attrition, until the one group of belligerents is exhausted; if millions after millions of human lives must continue to be offered up, until on the one side or the other there are no more to offer; if resentments must be kindled that can never cool, and despairs engendered from which there be no recovery, hopes of peace and of the willing concert of free peoples will be rendered vain and idle."

It was this terrible prospect that had moved us and our allies to offer the hand of peace at what we considered a suitable moment; it was soon to be converted into grim reality by the uncompromising attitude of our opponents.

In his Note President Wilson also expressed the hope that the conditions upon which the two sides felt they must insist would not prove irreconcilable. But an immediate discussion at a conference was necessary, for although, as has already been stated, the aims of both sides appeared in their main outlines to be similar, there was a great gap to be bridged over; the concrete objects for which the war was being fought had never been definitely stated. "Never yet have the authoritative spokesmen of either side avowed the precise objects which, if attained, would satisfy them and their people that the war had been fought out."

To help to fill up this gap was the practical aim of Wilson's Note, inspired as it was by a profound longing for peace. Having had the same desire, it was real balm to me at the moment of my resignation that the

call for peace which we sent forth from the one of the two hostile camps, should encounter such a harmonious echo in the world outside of our battles, and in a powerful quarter, in which it was certainly not prejudice in favour of our cause that had inspired the eloquent plea for peace. Alas that this very nation, the United States, should soon afterwards have found occasion to throw the weight of their power into the scales against us! . . .

The replies of Austria-Hungary and Germany concerning Wilson's proposal were dispatched in a few days (25th December). They contained no peace points. The reply of the Entente of the 10th January 1917 made up for this deficiency. It was full of self-righteous accusations, and put forward a peace programme which meant the deep humiliation of Germany and the annihilation of Austria-Hungary and Turkey.

THE U-BOAT WAR

THE unrestricted U-boat war had long cast its shadow before. It was the starting-point of the calamity which was to overwhelm the Quadruple Alliance.

The development of the submarine into an effective offensive weapon was achieved in Germany under the spur of the necessity to obtain some means of freeing herself from the strangle-hold of the enemy, which had effected the complete isolation of the Central Powers. The technical perfection and increased output of submarines was a source of natural pride to the German navy, which looked forward with growing confidence to achieving a decisive result through the use of this weapon. Splendid as were its achievements, it was from the beginning a source of political anxiety, especially in view of the distress and damage to neutral ships which, through mistakes and misunderstanding, were inevitably involved. The first and foremost amongst the neutrals were the United States, with their powerful sea-interests and their acute national sensitiveness, and the history of the U-boat activities during the war is interspersed with an unbroken series of protests, threats, negotiations, agreements, aggravations, and mutual recriminations which culminated in America's declaration of war.

In incurring this danger Germany had her eyes open, although her view might be clouded by false calculations, in spite of the many ominous incidents and proclamations, which our ally did not always fail to appreciate.

The various phases of the U-boat war are fresh in our memory. The Austro-Hungarian navy played an honourable, if a relatively small, part in it. The conduct of the U-boat war was primarily Germany's affair, though its political consequences affected Austria-Hungary as closely. I naturally followed the political developments of the U-boat question with the closest

attention, and on one or two occasions where Austria-Hungary's responsibility was involved I took an active part in the decisions.

Moreover, except when the matter might happen to be discussed, I had no occasion to oppose it as long as those responsible for the foreign relations of Germany clearly realised the risks involved by the constantly extending programme of the naval staff, and by the mistakes made by individual U-boat commanders, which were often no doubt inevitable; and so long as they successfully endeavoured to allay the keen irritation in America, of which we were made aware through official channels, and to deal with the very serious protests of the U.S.A. government regarding the sensational individual sinkings of ships in a conciliatory and dignified manner.

I only wish to mention one or two of the principal points in the diplomatic discussion of the U-boat war, leading up to the stage at which I made up my mind definitely to oppose decisions which I regarded as mischievous.

The U-boats constituted a regular portion of the German sea forces, and therefore naturally came into action immediately on the outbreak of war, but the U-boat war on merchantmen did not begin until the publication on 4th February 1915 of the order by the German High Command that, as a reprisal against the blockade and the proclamation of the whole North Sea as war territory, the waters round Great Britain and Ireland would be regarded as war territory as from the 18th February, and any merchantmen found upon them would be destroyed. In order to avoid running any risks, neutral shipping was warned not to sail within these limits, as mistakes and accidents might occur in spite of all precautions and the strictest orders.

We were prepared to receive protests from the neutrals, but thought that these would be confined to writing, as had been the case with those directed against the British breaches of international law.

The American protest was sufficiently definite and explicit. It already contained a warning: "Before taking any definite steps the German government should consider the critical situation that might arise in their mutual relations if a United States merchantman were destroyed, or the death of American citizens were caused."

The further paragraphs of the Note gave sufficient clarity to the proviso. Before the war on commerce began, the German government sent to Washington a very skilful reply, thoroughly justified by the facts, which was not unfavourably received in the States.

The quieter atmosphere which resulted was suddenly disturbed by the sinking on the 7th May of the British giant liner the *Lusitania*, which involved the death of a large number of American citizens. The incident caused enormous excitement in America. All explanations from Germany, proclamations of sympathy with the innocent victims, references to the fact that the ship was transporting munitions, proved unavailing. The magnitude and the terrible details of the incident affected popular imagination and roused hatred and indignation in England and America. The American government had to yield to the pressure of public opinion, and the second warning followed.

A restrained Note of protest from America, and the correspondence regarding guilt and reparation that ensued, demonstrated the goodwill of the two governments to avoid a breach, but failed to allay the bitterness of the United States.

An unforeseen turn was given by the United States to the correspondence regarding the *Lusitania* incident, offering a gleam of hope that the catastrophe, which had

caused a certain amount of consternation in Germany, might come to be the starting-point for an amelioration of the terrors of the war at sea.

Lansing's Note of the 23rd July 1915 replied to the wish expressed in a previous German Note that the freedom of the seas should be re-established, stating that in this matter his government had the same aim as Germany and invited the German government to join with the United States in practical collaboration for this proposal. There was no reason why this should not be done during the war. The Washington Cabinet was ready to use its influence as a common friend of both combatants to assist in obtaining this object.

The reception accorded to this promising move of America in responsible quarters in Germany seems to have been of a divided nature; there is no other way of explaining the fact that on the German side nothing further was done in a matter which seemed worth effort and sympathetic attention. Possibly the reason was that the sinking of the passenger ship *Arabic*, which occurred in the middle of August, again embittered the feeling between America and Germany. In an atmosphere of further American protests, coming when the *Lusitania* incident was not even settled, the German government may have hesitated to assume the same readiness on the part of Wilson to take action in a matter of the freedom of the seas, as had prompted the Note of the 27th July, especially as America would have had to take similar steps with regard to England, where indignation at the sinking of the *Arabic* was general. Unfortunately, therefore, the American proposal remained a pious wish and had no practical results. But there was another mark against the German account.

Although in their Note of the 15th November 1915 and in their proposal of the 18th January 1915 to the Entente,

and in various official acts, the American government demonstrated that they wished to see the rules of international law and the basic principles of humanity properly observed by all parties, yet its protests against Germany's conduct of the war at sea were peculiarly persistent. Germany was beginning to regard them, and the very far-reaching demands associated with them, as an intentional humiliation, and relations with the United States threatened to become very acute. Moreover, the new Chief of Staff of the Admiralty, von Holtzendorff, more and more definitely supported the "unrestricted" U-boat war, which he regarded as the only effective means of speedily subduing Britain. The Admiralty staff gave publicity to his views in a campaign in the press, so that wider and wider circles of the political and non-political public came to take a passionate interest in the subject. The discussion was naturally strongly influenced by the reports of naval and military experts. The flattering prospect of subduing England was held out; the danger of war with America was mentioned, it is true, but unfortunately always in a tone of contempt. Some did not consider this a serious danger, and others thought that it would come too late, after the U-boat war had done its work.

From the start I was aware of the danger to which our highly important relations with the United States, already endangered through the sensational sinkings of merchantmen, were exposed; but I had no occasion to intervene, either with advice or warning, to modify the sentiment of our allies or the measures which might result from it, since I knew that the Chancellor was considering this question dispassionately and was resisting the strong pressure that was being brought to bear upon him. The Chancellor was aware of the gravity of the consequences of the unrestricted U-boat war and was determined not to assume responsibility for

them. I was able to convince myself on this point from my personal relations with him and through other sources of information. Moreover, Bethmann-Hollweg was aware that I regarded a breach with the United States as the worst possible thing that could happen, in a position that was already exceptionally difficult—as a fatal change of power against us which nothing could make good.

A compromise was arrived at which, for the time being, bridged over the difference between the political and military views in Germany, and which at any rate could be tried: the so-called “intensive U-boat war.” The German government did not feel that they could forbid the navy to protect itself against the armed merchantmen introduced by the Entente as a protection against submarines, and which were thus of the nature of auxiliary cruisers. An order was therefore issued on the 8th February 1916, that armed enemy merchantmen could be sunk in the same way as men-of-war—without warning and without regard for the crew.

This solution, too, had no luck in America. The new measures, in as far as they might affect the interests and security of American trade and American citizens, were entirely unacceptable. Indeed, Wilson went so far as to claim that they conflicted with the promises expressly given by Germany, and held that the honour of his nation was at stake in accepting such limitations of its rights.

Such an attitude on the part of America made the intensive U-boat war especially dangerous for our relations with that Power, and required the greatest care on our part, or, that in their action against armed merchantmen the U-boats should be confined to the rules of privateers, that is, they could be held up and searched, but sunk only if they fled or resisted.

The German Admiralty took advantage of this position

to press for the introduction of the programme of the unlimited U-boat war which it had consistently advocated, and which, it assured the country, was alone capable of subduing England in the course of a few months, by starvation. All sections of public opinion were worked upon by press propaganda, consisting of abundant memoranda and statistical material supplied by experts, which could not fail to have a profound effect.

The Chancellor found it difficult to stand up against the increasing vehemence of the demands; but his conviction as to the political danger and the uncertainty of the success of the unrestricted U-boat war had not been shaken by the incomplete arguments of the naval circles. In a heated discussion between the parties concerned in March 1916 Herr von Bethmann's view again prevailed, and his triumph was proclaimed to the world through the resignation of the Admiral of the Fleet, von Tirpitz, the creator of the German U-boat fleet and the enthusiastic advocator of its most extensive application.

Meanwhile the intensive U-boat war took its course, and there were of course the inevitable incidents. Far-reaching in its consequences was the sinking of the unarmed passenger steamship *Sussex*, on the 24th March 1916, which the U-boat commander mistook for a mine-layer. Again numerous American citizens were involved in the disaster.

The echo from America and the Note of protest of the United States government, which thundered over on the 20th April 1916, made no doubt possible that the measure was now full, and that for Germany as well as for America the hour of grave decisions was now at hand. At the end of its more than solemn statement of the case the American Note concluded with the words: "Unless the Imperial government should now immediately declare and effect an abandonment of its present

methods of submarine warfare against passenger and freight-carrying vessels, the government of the United States can have no choice but to sever diplomatic relations with the German Empire altogether."

In leading German circles the view soon supervened that we must yield.

The German reply was dispatched on the 4th May. It complained of the difference between American feeling for the victims of the German U-boat war, and for the much more numerous victims of the British sea policy, which was in direct conflict with international law. But for Britain's action, Germany would from the start have observed the rules and traditions of international law. The German government would now go further, and had issued instructions that the U-boat war should conform to the generally recognised rules of privateer warfare; but Germany retained freedom of action in case the United States should not succeed, in accordance with their demand of the 15th November 1915, in inducing Great Britain to bring her naval policy into line with the generally recognised rules of international law.

The German government took this opportunity to refer to the American proposal of the 23rd July 1915, mentioned above, for re-establishing freedom of the seas, pointing out that the new instructions to the U-boat commanders eliminated the difficulties in the way of realising this object as far as the enemy too was concerned, and expressed its confidence that the American government would now emphatically represent to the British government that the war had ceased to be conducted in full accordance with the rules of international law.

The reference to America's own idea was certainly appropriate, and might perhaps not have failed to be of effect in that quarter, but a postscript to the German Note, stating that if the steps taken by America with

regard to Great Britain were unsuccessful, "the German government will be faced by a new situation, for which it must retain complete freedom of decision," spoilt the whole effect. The Reply from the United States came in very soon. It made no mention of any steps to be taken with regard to Great Britain, and politely but decisively rejected the conditions, stating that it could "not for a moment entertain, much less discuss, a suggestion that respect by German naval authorities for the rights of citizens of the United States upon the high seas should in any way or in the slightest degree be made contingent upon the conduct of any other government affecting the rights of neutrals and non-combatants. Responsibility in such matters is single, not joint ; absolute, not relative."

The many justifiable complaints of the Central Powers that the Entente, and especially Great Britain, did not adhere to the "Declaration of London" were soon afterwards disposed of in a communication by Great Britain and France to the neutrals that they no longer considered themselves bound by the "Declaration of London."

Peace with America had been maintained, but there was no occasion for viewing the future with confidence. The immediate irritations of the U-boat war had perhaps been eliminated, but feeling towards Germany had not improved in the least. The one-sided enemy propaganda conducted on a large scale and by every available means was maintained unceasingly, and converted into hatred the antipathy for Germany which had existed from the beginning of the war.

It was but a counsel of political prudence not to furnish fresh food for this sentiment. To cultivate our relations with America was at the time easier for Austria-Hungary, inasmuch as the areas of friction were smaller

and, in spite of our protests regarding the way in which the United States practised neutrality, we had maintained good relations with them, which did not suffer through an unfortunate occurrence, which however had no political significance—the recall of our ambassador, Dr. Dumba, in accordance with the wishes of America. After the embassy had been left for several months to a chargé d'affaires, America herself towards the end of September 1916 expressed the wish that we should send out an ambassador. We immediately complied with this request, and the new ambassador, Count Tarnowski, met with the most friendly reception at Washington.

Meanwhile the U-boat war in Germany was working up to a crisis. Though the May agreements had relieved the political tension, there was still much bitterness in military circles, as they keenly resented that Germany was not allowed to make the most effective use of that weapon which the experts promised would relieve their hard-pressed fronts, and would bring about the subjection of the enemy in his own element, the sea, where there was no other means of getting at him.

The naval command became more and more firmly convinced that the moment for starting the unrestricted U-boat war could no longer be postponed, and this conviction spread to a constantly growing circle. It was only natural that political considerations should not come first with the Admiralty, and that they should wish to give effect to their unshakable belief in the power of the new weapon, which had been so brilliantly introduced, to decide the war. Though the speedy submission of England was not talked of as confidently as before, the ruthless use of the submarine appeared to be the only means of counteracting the terrifying material strength of the enemy, by interfering with his communications.

At the end of August the German Naval Command

brought up their proposals for discussion with the other departments concerned, the military authorities appearing already to have been largely converted to their view.

The discussions took place at the German General Headquarters on the 31st August. Helfferich, the former Secretary of State, tells us in the second volume of his *World War* that the whole political, military, and economic position, as well as the technical possibilities and all the effects of the U-boat war, were gone into on this occasion. The conference was considerably influenced by the Rumanian declaration of war, which had occurred a few days previously, and the fact that considerable Rumanian forces had invaded Siebenbürgen. All available troops had to be hurled at Rumania. In these circumstances Hindenburg and Ludendorff submitted that until the Rumanian peril had been dealt with, the High Command could not accept the responsibility for the introduction of the unrestricted U-boat war.

It therefore appeared, and this was Helfferich's impression, that both the responsible generals had been converted to the unrestricted use of the U-boat, and were merely deferring their decision. Details of the course of the discussion and the conclusions arrived at were not published.

Everything depended upon the extent to which the conviction, suggested by a long course of propaganda, had already taken root in public opinion, that the U-boats were a reliable means of bringing victory and of terminating the war, and whether those politically responsible still had the wish and the power effectively to resist this feeling, which was gaining ground, with all available arguments.

The question of the unrestricted U-boat war was keenly debated by the parliamentary parties too; and their views which were becoming more and more unanimous

were expressed almost heatedly at a meeting of the main Committee of the Reichstag. Statements made by the Chancellor on this occasion, to a certain extent took these views into account. He was obviously already under the influence of a movement which was becoming irresistible. It was still possible to avoid taking the decision, but the Chancellor knew after this meeting that, in continuing to oppose the unrestricted U-boat war, he could no longer count upon the support of the Reichstag, if the High Command decided that the moment had come. It was obvious that the decision no longer rested with the Chancellor, and, in view of the prestige of the military representatives, who spoke of being responsible for the success of the war, his position was exceptionally difficult.

Bethmann's misgivings were subjected to the pressure of what had come to be universally accepted as a dogma, that the U-boat weapon could save the situation. National indignation at the inhuman hunger blockade of the British and the partiality of America, who took no steps against the blockade, although she impeded Germany in the full use of her defensive weapons, made the public lose their sense of judgment with regard to the promises of their favourite military leaders, and become impatient with the cautious attitude of their responsible political leader.

The Chancellor was on the horns of a dilemma. The preliminary discussions regarding our peace move were taking place. Apart from his feelings upon the merits of the case, which led Bethmann to agree to my suggestion, he was relieved to think that if our step proved successful, the necessity for taking a decision regarding the thorny U-boat question would be obviated, while the mere passage of time until the peace matter had been settled would presumably call for a certain delay, and would make further consideration possible.

In these critical October days I made it quite clear to Bethmann, and indeed he had recognised it for a long time, that I regarded the unrestricted U-boat war as involving the greatest possible danger to us at a time when all our available resources were pledged up to the hilt. I knew and appreciated the arguments that were brought forward in support of having recourse to this *ultima ratio*. I naturally could not form any opinion regarding the technical questions involved, and I was not venturing to express an opinion on the statistical conclusions regarding the achievements which were hoped for from the U-boats, though they seemed to me to be exceedingly optimistic. But I regarded all these considerations, although our naval command too was influenced by them, as of no account whatever in view of the danger, nay, the apodictic certainty, that war with America would result if the unrestricted U-boat war were decided upon.

The spectre of America's declaration of war haunted leading circles in Germany too, especially after the American Note of the 10th May 1916; but some really regarded it as a mere spectre which should have no terror for the courageous, while others were prepared to reckon with the addition of a new enemy, but one who was not adequately prepared for the war, in view of the rapid success which they expected. The more far-seeing perceived the danger which threatened us if America came in against us: unlimited financial and material support for our European opponents, an increase in the enemies' superiority in human material, the appearance of an American army in Europe, an economic war after the war, whereas we were looking to America to help us in the reconstruction period, much more serious consequences for us in the event of defeat.

But I was convinced that all these considerations, if they were to be the basis of the decisions of the Entente

Powers, did not exhaust the question ; they scarcely touched it. If America were challenged by a decision which we might know would be followed by a declaration of war as surely as night follows day, we would acquire a new enemy who would be practically unconquerable, who could carry on the war when and where he thought best, and who could take as much time as he thought necessary in order to bring his unlimited resources into the field, and whom nothing could force to give in before he had achieved complete success. We would be dealing with a nation that weighed its decisions long and thoroughly, but then carried them out with that systematic Anglo-Saxon pertinacity and consistency which a sense of fresh strength and security made possible. We had experienced the miracle of the Kitchener army. We could not doubt that America would achieve a similar result at greater leisure and on a much larger scale. Nothing could be more fatal than to depend upon the old legend of "American bluff." It was based on a complete misunderstanding of the character of the American people. There was nothing boastful in the American statements of their point of view from time to time during the war ; they were considered, and each word implied serious determination. And as it was well known that America could carry out her wishes, I could not understand the fact—and I did not conceal it either in Germany or at home—that so many persons tried to deceive themselves as to the gravity of the situation by assuming that America was merely trying to intimidate us. Neither did it seem reasonable to me that the discussions should turn almost wholly upon the mechanical and statistical possibilities of the U-boat war, the practical achievements of which the U-boats were capable, the amount of enemy tonnage, and Britain's means of obtaining supplies, and also upon the moral effect of intimidating the

enemy population and making the neutrals nervous ; the data being always based upon calculations which may have been reliable as far as our own resources were concerned, but in the case of the enemy were based upon estimates which were naturally subject to error, and did actually soon prove to have been mistaken. Too little account had been taken of the defensive measures that might be developed by the enemy, and of his ability to replace tonnage. Our enemies' early dismay at the surprising achievements of the submarines was great. But, as the Entente Powers became more acutely aware of the danger, so they realised the urgency of finding means to combat it ; and the fact had to be reckoned with that the energy and inventiveness of such old and highly developed sea Powers should in the end succeed in discovering effective counter-measures. At the time it was impossible even to guess at the prodigious developments of emergency shipping.

It seemed to me that the Germans had put the moral effect of the unrestricted U-boat war on the wrong side of the balance sheet in their calculations.

As had been clearly indicated, the American declaration of war followed immediately upon the commencement of this method of fighting. We would either succeed in "forcing Britain to her knees" or not. If we did not succeed, there could be no question of moral effect on the enemy ; but if we succeeded, or if the enemy were even seriously threatened by our success, America would have the strongest possible motive for straining every effort and bringing all her energies to bear, even if she had not previously entered the war. After all, it might be regarded as certain that the United States would not permit Britain to be destroyed by Germany as a sea Power.

We therefore had grounds for assuming that even the complete success at sea of the unrestricted U-boat

war against Britain would not bring peace, but would prolong the war. America would seek, and with her indomitable energy and inexhaustible resources would find, the means for restoring the balance in favour of the Entente. This she would do with quiet confidence, without permitting herself to be influenced or disturbed by any external circumstances. Time itself worked in favour of America, who could develop her strength methodically against the Central Powers, who were using up their forces which were still unbroken and experienced in fighting, but whose numbers were already diminishing.

But apart from all these considerations the unrestricted U-boat war must prove an obstacle to peace, since it would immediately exclude America from playing the part which Bethmann and I had allotted to President Wilson in our minds, in accordance with his own ideas. As I have already mentioned, the Chancellor had welcomed our peace move of the 12th December, partly as being calculated to defer premature decisions in the U-boat question. I wanted to provide as much scope as possible for Wilson in case he should intervene, as, in spite of all the distrust in Germany, he was, in view of the distribution of power, the only possible mediator. My endeavours were naturally brought to a sudden conclusion by the unrestricted U-boat war.

In spite of any doubts I might feel as a layman, I never allowed my attitude to the U-boat question to be influenced by my views as to its effectiveness from the military point of view. I was guided absolutely and entirely by political considerations. In my view the most successful unrestricted U-boat war was as fraught with danger as an unsuccessful one. It would bring war with America, and thereby, according to all human reckoning, would bring about our destruction, for there would be no possibility whatever of equalising the forces.

Austria-Hungary played a glorious though modest part in the U-boat war, the German Naval Command being throughout the determining factor in it. Our Naval Command worked in close agreement with the German Naval Staff, whose extensive schemes were agreed to and accepted by us at Pola. It would have been difficult to conceive of our navy acting according to different principles from those of our German allies, although our ships endeavoured to avoid regrettable incidents. A different naval policy, if adopted by us, would not have counted much in numbers, and would only have resulted in friction between the allies. From the political point of view we were equally involved in the rashness of the step, even if it was taken only by Germany.

As long as the Chancellor used his full authority to veto the proposal of the unrestricted U-boat war, which never entirely disappeared from the agenda—i.e. he did so up till the end of 1916—and succeeded, in spite of the most aggravating circumstances, in settling all the incidents that occurred, I was not seriously worried, although each new protest from America left a sediment of bitterness on both sides.

On each occasion Bethmann and I found that we were in full agreement.

But later, when the tireless pressure of the German Admiralty was beginning to tell, and induced wide circles, and finally the Reichstag itself, to clamour for the introduction of the unrestricted U-boat war, the Chancellor found himself more and more isolated, and found no support in the parties which were generally amenable to his views. Germany had already practically handed over the decision to the High Command, and the Chancellor could only act in an advisory capacity and seek to gain time.

I was now in a difficult position. My opinion was unchanged. I was not subjected to pressure from the

public opinion of any portion of the monarchy. The press of the two capitals took small part in the excited discussions of German publicists on the U-boat theme. The articles of our leading papers were cautious and non-committal. The American danger was generally taken more seriously in Austria-Hungary than in Germany; and the element of irritation with the United States was absent in Austria-Hungary.

Bethmann-Hollweg did not make any attempt to alter my attitude. Throughout the whole critical period I had the impression that he still retained all his misgivings, but was getting more and more resigned. He may have assumed, although he never said so in so many words, that I, like himself, would eventually have to yield to the decision of the military authorities.

However, my attitude to the important political question of the day was no longer the same as the Chancellor's. He saw the demand of the generals for the unrestricted U-boat war coming, and prepared for them with heavy internal struggles. His resistance became weaker for reasons arising out of his peculiar position, and I appreciated them, though I could not accept them. All the reasons brought forward failed to convince me or to disguise from me the fact that even if the whole statement of the case were incontestable, that would be of no use to us, since we were not equal to tackling the new danger that we were incurring. In my opinion, it was like leaping into deep water in order to escape the storm.

In such circumstances I was naturally not likely to allay the fears of the Chancellor. I came to be regarded as a discordant element in all responsible, even in the highest quarters, which were striving systematically and with growing emphasis to win the agreement of the German political leaders and of their allies. They grew more and more impatient with the ministers whose

Cassandra-like utterances, though confined within the limit of conferences, seemed calculated to delay the process of wearing down the opposition.

Feeling against me at German Headquarters became more and more vocal as the German U-boat fever increased, and as the 1st February 1917 approached—the date fixed by the German Army Command for the opening of the unrestricted U-boat war, no doubt with good reason, as being best calculated to react effectively upon the position at the Front.

Our young monarch, at whose warm request, made in the death-chamber of the Emperor Francis Joseph, I had retained the portfolio of the Foreign Office, was far too much engaged in plans for peace to favour the German U-boat scheme, which would necessarily result in the immediate extension of the war-area. But the force of the technical argument—which, in view of the general circumstances and our military indebtedness to Germany, exercised a great moral pressure, the prestige of the German Emperor, who had so long experience of government—could not fail to influence the young Emperor Charles and made it more and more difficult for him to maintain an attitude of pure opposition. My warnings were met with the remark that nothing had yet been decided.

On the occasion of the Emperor William's visit to Vienna on the 28th November it was obvious that I was regarded as "unsatisfactory in promoting cordial relations with Germany." This led to my resignation on the 21st December 1916.

After I left the Foreign Office I was once again engaged in the U-boat question, just before the decision was taken.

The German High Command were pressing the matter more and more impatiently. At the end of December they demanded that the notification of the introduction of the unrestricted U-boat war should immediately be

dispatched to the United States. The Foreign Office again opposed it, pointing to the necessity of waiting until the peace move of the Central Powers had had its chance. At the beginning of January the German Admiralty demanded that the new measures should be introduced as early as the 1st February, regardless of any peace action, "in order to be able to achieve the necessary effect before the new harvest." The decision in Germany seems to have been taken as early as the 10th January, and that with the concurrence of the German Chancellor.

We now had to make the preparations for the final step and arrive at agreements with our other allies. The responsible persons in Austria-Hungary entertained great doubts. They all expressed their opinion ; each one felt that a fateful decision was at stake.

On the 22nd January I too was summoned by the Emperor at Baden (Vienna) and was asked my opinion regarding the unrestricted U-boat war, upon which Germany had decided. I repeated my old misgivings and maintained them, for America's declaration of war still remained as the certain consequence of such a decision. It was true that the German High Command asserted that they would have finished with England before America could be ready for war. This, however, was doubtful, and even if it proved to be correct it would not alter America's point of view in the least, since America would be in a position, with her fresh forces, to prepare for a long war against the exhausted Central Powers, and thus to revive the fighting capacity of the Entente too. But the very earliest phases of the new situation that would arise would be calculated to spur the Entente Powers to the greatest possible endeavours. We should be staking everything upon it, and the first victims in the case of failure would be Austria-Hungary. I described as criminally frivolous, hopes which had been

expressed, based upon the assumption that, in accordance with his peace platform, Wilson would not decide upon war. The effect upon neutrals would be lamentable ; we could not, within any appreciable period, reckon upon the possibility of mediation.

The monarch seemed to be in the greatest perplexity. He shared my concern, but held that we could scarcely resist the German demands in this matter. I advised further consideration, and that we should ourselves more closely examine the German calculations.

In a restricted Crown Council on the 24th January, to which, although still Joint Minister, I was not summoned, it was decided to concur in the unrestricted U-boat war.

As I learned later, those present were decided by the following facts to waive their misgivings : (1) that, in the German view, the heavy enemy offensive which was being prepared on the western front made it necessary that their front should be relieved, as they could not resist a second attack of this nature ; (2) that if we failed to concur, Germany would demand our agreement ; (3) the hope that Wilson would not decide upon war, as he had been re-elected on a peace programme and was not free as to his diplomatic attitude.

After what I have said above it is not necessary for me to deal with these arguments any further.

In my diary against 24th January there stands the short remark : " Beginning of a fateful period."

CHAPTER XIII

THE MONARCH AND THE HEIR TO THE THRONE

A RETROSPECT of my two years at the head of the Foreign Office does not afford much food for comfort. I took office during the war without being able to alter the course of events. For what I did or failed to do I was responsible. But this responsibility was to a great extent limited by the sphere of responsibility of other departments in the Constitution, and by the natural limits imposed by a war carried on by partners.

The Emperor Francis Joseph had always been the determining influence in foreign policy. Nothing could be done that was not in accordance with his views ; but in his views he was always amenable to argument, so that in his work the minister always knew where he stood with his sovereign. If he differed from him, agreement was always easily arrived at, in which case he was certain of valuable help and support in his office—support which was all the more effective, since the logical directness and understanding simplicity of the imperial manner of approaching a problem compelled a minister to get his own ideas very clear if he wished to make them acceptable to his sovereign. Vague beating about the bush was ignored. If the difference of opinion could not be solved, co-operation came to an end. But as long as one was a minister of the Emperor, one was always on firm ground, did not work in the air, and knew that one was safe from backstairs attacks. At the same time one derived considerable strength from the experience and worldly wisdom of the monarch. Francis Joseph was not always as completely informed as he sought to be, and required and generally assumed that others were. For reasons that have often been mentioned, everything did not always get through to the Emperor in its original form ; but the Emperor drew almost always the right conclusion from the premises that he had before him. He generally hit the nail on the head.

His knowledge of men pierced the mask which so many assume before the great ones of the earth, and he formed a picture of individual personalities from their surroundings and their achievements, the knowledge of which was accessible to him. This picture may have been incomplete in certain respects, but it was seldom wrong in those features with which he was concerned. Where necessary, his great intuition made up for any lack of concrete knowledge and adjusted his impressions.

It is true that the monarch's nobility of character caused him to assume, as a matter of course, qualities in certain classes of persons which on occasion were lacking. The most careful proof was always necessary in order to induce him to decide against anybody whose birth, education, status, profession, or general bearing appeared to be a guarantee of his honourable character or capacity. If he once recognised that he had been mistaken, he acted accordingly.

As in all departments, it was a pleasure to work with the Emperor Francis Joseph in foreign affairs. He was most careful to see that in all matters which concerned other branches of administration their concurrence had been obtained. When this was not possible, the sovereign presided in the Crown Council, where he exercised, generally with success, the authority of that estate of the realm which, not only in virtue of his position but also of the keen sense with which he approached all the interwoven interests of the whole and of the individual territories, was able to indicate the right course and to find or suggest a compromise of a conciliatory nature.

Did then the Emperor not see the terribly dangerous position in which the Austro-Hungarian monarchy had been placed by the war? He certainly did, more clearly perhaps than many of his advisers; and it caused him great pain. He seldom mentioned his

anxieties, devoting himself entirely to the task of defence, and radiating that confidence which he succeeded in maintaining in his own courageous heart in the face of most trying circumstances. From chance remarks I gathered that he succeeded in reconciling his firm belief in the continued vocation of his dynasty to hold together the aggregate of the peoples of the monarchy in a firm but elastic co-operation, with his realisation of the fact that the war, whether it ended well or ill, must involve very great changes for Austria-Hungary. The Emperor believed in the extensive adaptability of the vital principle of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy to all progressive phases of development in the future. It was not the peoples that caused him anxiety, but the politicians, who found it difficult to agree and were capable of causing much harm through their excessive zeal. He certainly never entertained the possibility of the monarchy breaking up as it did two years after his death. It was not possible that the monarch should have such insight into the minds which planned all that was to happen, or should realise the decay of the pillars that bore up the ancient structure. Moreover, the seeds were not yet ripe ; many of those who contributed to the overthrow never dreamt that they were capable of causing it ; many no doubt even to-day are surprised at the part that they played.

Was it inevitable after all that everything should happen as it did ? Considered from the determinist point of view, yes, else it would not have occurred. Destiny, who has no favourites, only instruments, brushes aside, on the fateful occasions when she intervenes, those who stand in her way, and fulfils her purpose when her path has been cleared. The Emperor Francis Joseph's life came to an end just as the two internal instruments of government in the monarchy were becoming helpless, and the war was entering upon

the fateful phase brought about by the German determination to introduce the unrestricted U-boat war.

The outbreak of the war found the heir to the throne on military service. He was at General Headquarters, having been attached to the Commander-in-Chief of the army, the Archduke Frederick. The young prince saw and experienced much that was not altogether edifying. As a soldier the Archduke Frederick was an admirable model for him, but the Archduke Charles had no real sphere of activity and his time was not usefully filled up, though he took the opportunity of making careful observations which, on his accession to rule, led him to make radical changes in the army command, which was transferred from Teschen to Baden.

The Archduke Charles had on the theoretical side been prepared to a certain extent for the business of government. The Emperor gradually gave him practical experience in it. Since the beginning of the war he had shown a keen interest in foreign affairs, and to keep him informed, the diplomatic correspondence was placed at his disposal. His appointment at Teschen gave the Archduke leisure for many visits to Vienna, and he took advantage of them to inform himself thoroughly of all diplomatic matters.

From the time when I took office I was thus brought into close association with the Archduke Charles, who frequently came to the Ballhausplatz, especially on all important occasions, to discuss the situation. I would explain this with the care which I felt proper in view of my duty to give the heir to the throne a comprehensive view of the activities of my department. On his side, the Archduke gave me first-hand information as to the military situation, which he criticised very reasonably.

In the Archduke I had an attentive listener, who was capable of asking intelligent questions. Until the final

illness of the Emperor he showed no inclination to play an active part in diplomacy. The Archduke Charles was far too much filled with respect for his great-uncle and with admiration for his enlightened experience (which embraced a whole period of history) and his high authority to presume to criticise or to take the initiative. On the other hand, the monarch was at pains to take the heir to the throne into his councils where decisions regarding the greater interests of the monarchy were involved. On the 8th March 1915 the Archduke Charles was for the first time present at a Crown Council; it was the Crown Council which was to consider whether I should be authorised to negotiate with Italy on the basis of surrendering Austro-Hungarian territory. The monarch did not wish to diminish the inheritance without the concurrence of his successor.

The Archduke suggested a younger man than his years warranted. His uncle, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, for whom he had a great regard, had shown the keenest interest in him since he had become his presumptive successor, an interest which extended to his education, but he had kept him in the background politically, and for a long time had treated him as a child. He had permeated him with his own ideas, and not encouraged him to form his own judgments. The high vocation, which at no distant time awaited the heir to the throne, required that this omission should be made good. In any case the further development of his political capacities would have depended upon the extent to which he would have succeeded in achieving a more profound knowledge of character, and the capacity to examine critically the fair counsels of casual advisers and to base his own judgment upon carefully considered facts.

The Archduke Charles was thrown into the hard school of a great war through the tragedy of his uncle's death,

and his innate capacities now found free development. First, it was necessary that the Archduke should more or less find himself. Though he had many of Francis Ferdinand's ideas, his character was quite different. He was easy of access and companionable, and was easily affected by any external impressions. This was to be a danger to the young Emperor. During the preparatory period it was an advantage, as it was then only a matter of gaining general knowledge and not of taking important decisions. The development of the heir to the throne was promising and justified the best hopes.

For more than a year, during which the Archduke Charles spent much time in Vienna, I was able to follow his development with the greatest interest. The young prince made this easy for me by giving me every mark of his confidence. Then came his departure to the Italian front.

On the 8th March 1916 the Archduke informed me that he was taking over the command of an army corps on the southern front. He said that the Emperor had so decided, and that it was entirely in accordance with his own wishes, since the inactivity at Headquarters did not satisfy him. He realised the importance of being near Vienna, but he wished and felt it his duty to take part in the great battles which were imminent. When the Archduke Charles perceived that I showed little enthusiasm for the decision that had been taken, as it would remove him from the presence of the aged monarch, whom he might at any moment be called upon to succeed, he added that it would not be for long, and would principally be for the coming offensive against Italy.

In point of fact it resulted in a prolonged absence. The Archduke was given important commands on the eastern front. Fortunately the Emperor's intelligence

was still sufficiently vigorous and his industry sufficiently keen to prevent any difficulties from arising for some time. It was not until the autumn, when the Emperor Francis Joseph showed pronounced signs of weariness about the middle of September, that it became necessary to think of the return of the Archduke, to take the place of the Emperor as Commander-in-Chief of the Army. But the step was delayed, as in the meantime the sovereign's condition had improved. By the 24th October I felt it my duty to urge that the Archduke Charles should constantly be at hand to support the Emperor as Commander-in-Chief or as the War Lord might otherwise direct.

However, matters did not run smoothly. The old ruler, who on the whole felt quite well up to a temporary illness at the beginning of September, was reluctant to admit the necessity of assistance. The Archduke now spent as much time as he could at Schoenbrunn, but it was not until the 18th November, three days before those kind eyes closed, that I found the monarch, who was sinking fast, disposed to order the recall of the Archduke, after I had persistently requested him to do so "to make his work easier."

CHAPTER XIV

STÜRGKH AND TISZA

IN all countries the person in charge of foreign affairs is either the chief or a member of the cabinet, forming part of it and having a vote in it. He may need to secure the agreement of the other members of the cabinet, but they too need to secure his. This gives him the necessary influence upon the whole policy of government, and assures the necessary co-ordination of internal and external policy. Only in Austria-Hungary the Minister of Foreign Affairs was in an isolated position. He was joint minister for the two countries, but did not form any cabinet with such colleagues as were also joint ministers. He was not even their president, for he was always specifically appointed to preside at a "joint ministers' conference"—that is to say at those conferences in which the joint ministers of Austria and Hungary discussed matters affecting the two countries jointly. On these matters the joint ministers were responsible to the delegations selected from two parliaments. At law, the Minister for Foreign Affairs was bound to consult with and obtain the agreement of the two Prime Ministers in the general direction of foreign affairs. Unless he arrived at an agreement with both he could not carry out his responsibilities to the delegations—since the Prime Ministers necessarily had both of them a majority in their parliaments and therefore in the delegations, which were chosen proportionally according to the parties—so as to secure the necessary support for his external policy in which the two had a voice. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, then, had no vote in internal affairs. The most he could do was to seek, through his personal influence and power of persuasion, to check political experiments in the two states which he regarded as likely to damage the monarchy, or if the occasion called for it to threaten resignation, as Count Andrassy had done to Count Hohenwart.

The Prime Ministers, on the other hand, had a very considerable voice in foreign policy, for they not only assisted in determining its general lines but were also the leaders of the two parliaments or delegations and, so to speak, provided the Minister for Foreign Affairs, whom they supported, with the necessary majority. If he could not arrive at agreement with either one of the Prime Ministers, the position of the joint minister became untenable.

A good understanding with the two Prime Ministers was therefore of primary importance in the conduct of foreign affairs.

In the years 1915 and 1916 I was fortunate in working in thorough agreement with Count Stürgkh and Count Tisza. Greatly though the personal political position of the two Prime Ministers differed in their respective countries, they were always in agreement with me, as with one another, in their determination to bring the monarchy safely through this crisis in its existence, devoting to it all the resources of the two countries, and preserving and reconciling the interests of the whole and of the parts, while at the same time carefully endeavouring to smooth over any occasion of internal friction.

They both brought to our joint work the keen appreciation that it was not only a question of applying the necessary understanding to foreign problems, but that far-seeing political insight was required in order to gauge results which the various conceivable solutions of the world crisis were likely to bring about in the internal structure of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, or of the two states.

It is not for me to pronounce any judgment upon Count Stürgkh's policy in Austria. His position differed radically from Count Tisza's, in that he ruled without parliament, therefore gaining greater freedom of action, but incurring the graver responsibility.

I dutifully abstained from any adverse criticism of the very contentious conditions of Austria, but naturally, when circumstances arose in which I required Count Stürgkh's support, the difference between the political backing behind Count Stürgkh and behind his Hungarian colleague was often revealed too. Count Stürgkh did not hesitate to admit the inferiority of his position, but described it as the lesser of two evils between which he had to choose. He used to emphasise that it was not his own personal feeling which led him to hesitate to summon parliament, but rather the views of parliamentary men. He referred to the fact that parliamentary leaders warned him against any attempt to summon parliament during the war, since it could not be expected to take up an attitude worthy of the dignity and the interests of the state, or to support the government in its task. I merely suggested incidentally that the wishes of parliamentary people themselves did not settle the question, since legislative activity was not merely a parliamentary right, but the duty of parliament to the people. I had no means of dealing with this situation, which meant that only in Hungary would it be apparent that my policy had general support. The most important consequence for me was that the delegations could not be summoned, and that I alone therefore of the foreign ministers of the great Powers lacked the opportunity of expounding my policy before a competent forum.

Though Count Stürgkh could not bring any considerable authority to bear upon his share of the conduct of Foreign Affairs, his help was always useful, owing to the clarity and ease with which he grasped the problems under consideration, and his unusual capacity for work.

He had little confidence in the possibility of effecting an internal reconstruction of Austria, unless the war ended in a good peace. He used to say that Austria

was not a state, but a conglomeration—not a very hopeful remark for an Austrian Prime Minister. He seemed to regard the war as a test of Austria's capacity to survive. He had more faith in winning battles than in holding conferences. There was one important internal question in Austria that he had to tackle, as it could not be postponed—the Galician problem. He drafted a manifesto of reform for Galicia in such a way as to give effect, within the framework of the Austrian state, to the consequences of the declaration of the independence of Congress Poland. He did not live to see it actually declared, on the 5th November 1916.

Mutual confidence, and their loyal co-operation as colleagues, led Stürgkh and Tisza to carry on an active correspondence, and to maintain close personal relations, which naturally made it easier to deal with matters, and helped to smooth over many difficulties which inevitably arose, as the two states advocated their interests with equal enthusiasm. The effective treatment of mutual affairs was also furthered thereby.

With Count Tisza, whose old friendship I particularly valued, I had for long been accustomed to maintain an intimate exchange of ideas regarding matters connected with foreign policy, especially since I had joined his Cabinet in June 1913. With his keen interest in these matters, his lively intelligence, and his power of rapidly reviewing a situation, he always got to the root of the matter. Whether one agreed with him or not, any subject that one discussed with him gained in clarity and precision. He was definite in his views and expressed them forcibly. But he would listen with the most practical interest to the views of others if he considered them relevant, and no real argument was lost upon him. When he was right—and sometimes when he was wrong—he could be most convincing, carrying one away with

his genuine personal conviction and the powerful logic of his conclusions, any flaws in which it would require a sharp eye to discern. Tisza's dialectics proved an admirable touchstone for the value of one's own opinions. If one was able to stand up to them it gave one more confidence in one's own cause, and he would also fall in with one's views, for he was not obstinate in his ideas excepting upon certain points, which in his case were not a matter of the understanding, but of his whole nature, his essential feelings and beliefs. In his will he was obstinate. When he had made up his mind on a thing it was exceedingly difficult to move him. This gave the impression of a certain brusqueness and hardness which attached his supporters to him, as it suggested strength and inspired confidence, and affected his opponents so unpleasantly that he was the best beloved and the best hated statesman in Hungary.

But as he avoided all intrigue he was always an honest foe to his enemies and polite in his personal dealings with them. To his friends he was a true, open-hearted, and affectionate friend. This gave one a pleasant feeling of security in one's relations with him.

Having grown up in the parliamentary atmosphere, he was through and through a party man; but above all he was a patriot, and regarded his party as the most suitable instrument for carrying out an effective patriotic policy according to his conviction. Hungary's welfare was with him the first consideration; but since politics are conducted by men, and every man has enemies, nobody, not even he, was able to work together with all Hungary for the good of his country. He conceived any effective policy only as the work of a party hardened in the inevitable struggle with the policy of the opposition. He had therefore to rely entirely upon his party and make it as great and powerful as he could. In thus dominating his party

he was following the practice of his father, Koloman Tisza, and he succeeded in doing so for a long period of years. It was his strength that finally proved to be his undoing.

Official documents which have now been published have revealed to the public that Tisza was the last of the responsible advisers of the Crown to give his unwilling assent to the declaration of war upon Serbia. When he realised that this was inevitable, he made his assent subject to conditions which would maintain the defensive character of the war. When Sir Edward Grey's last attempt at mediation was transmitted to us by Germany, it was Tisza who insisted that Grey's proposal should not be rejected *a limine*, but should be accepted, subject to two just conditions : the cessation of Russian mobilisation and the retention by our troops of the positions occupied in Serbia during the course of the negotiations. These conditions proved impossible to carry out, owing to Russia's refusal to comply with the first one.

But when the war became a tragic reality, Tisza devoted his whole energies to the success of the war which had been forced upon us. He had the salvation of the monarchy as much at heart as the retention of the territory of St. Stephen's Crown, which was most immediately affected by the causes and consequences of the war. He took the most active interest in the welfare of the fighting forces at home and at the front, sought to lessen the inevitable friction between civil and military authority, and succeeded in effectively protecting his own field of authority against the encroachment of the military. In parliament he succeeded in maintaining the *Treuga Dei* between the parties, so that for a long time there was actually no opposition to the government in parliament.

It was only natural that Tisza should give me the benefit of his support in my foreign policy, which was

conducted in complete agreement with the two Prime Ministers. Tisza would not have co-operated for one day if he had not agreed with it. He would have required my resignation or resigned himself. He warmly supported my policy in the Hungarian House of Representatives, and where necessary, threw light on what was happening. With the opposition he naturally had little success, since his opposition was also mine, as I had been in his cabinet. As Tisza wanted to do his best to avoid a split on party lines regarding foreign policy, especially in view of the agreement arrived at regarding disputes at home, he discussed with Count Andrassy in July 1916 a method for meeting the repeated complaints of the leaders of the opposition that they were not kept adequately informed as to the course of foreign affairs, and I also agreed to this method.

Although it should have been part of the official duty of the two Prime Ministers to keep the political leaders, including those of the opposition, fully informed on foreign affairs, I agreed to undertake this task myself and to receive responsible members of the opposition parties as they might desire, and to keep them informed of the position generally and of my policy, as I had indeed always been accustomed to do when approached by any particular politician.

The arrangement did not work well. The responsible leaders of the opposition, Count Andrassy, Count Apponyi, and Rakovszky, whose confidence I could not claim to possess, called on me and received all the explanations they desired. We exchanged ideas and found there was at least as much difference of opinion between themselves as between them and myself. Although I placed myself at their disposal, they did not come again. They merely applied for further information occasionally to a Foreign Office official whom I named to them.

The only result of this diversion with the party leaders,

which they themselves brought to a conclusion, was that violent parliamentary attacks were made upon me in August and September by the opposition in the Hungarian parliament, attacks against which Tisza energetically defended me.

As indicating my relations with Tisza and his personality, I will quote a short letter which he sent me at the end of 1915. I do so, although the proud hopes which then inspired him proved vain, and shortly before his terrible end he was to be the first person publicly to announce that : " We have lost the war ! "

Tisza's words show how closely he and I agreed in our political principles. After quoting them, I will mention two essential points upon which we disagreed.

" BUDAPEST,
" 31st December 1915.

" MY DEAR FRIEND,

" Having come to the last day of the year I feel I must just write you a few lines to express my joy at the success which we have had hitherto, and my confident hope that in applying our joint forces honourably and with full confidence in each other we shall succeed in achieving the final victory.

Setting aside all false modesty, I believe that you and I are necessary to bring the monarchy out of the labyrinth of the external and internal complications, dangers, and enemies which surround it, into safe harbour, and to achieve the only possible guarantee of our future security and greatness, and to ensure that Hungary shall play her proper part in the service of the interests of the monarchy as a great Power ; and I am infinitely grateful to Providence that we have found each other.

Wishing you unqualified satisfaction, success, and happiness in your public and private life,

Ever your friend,

STEPHAN TISZA."

He bore witness to his political convictions with his life. The tragedy of his fate lies in the fact that while he strove earnestly to achieve his lofty aims, his judgment on certain points affecting Hungary's actual position in Europe and the position of the Magyar race in Hungary itself was led astray by atavistic prejudice; he sincerely believed that the welfare of his country would be assured by maintaining unchanged the relationship between the various peoples of Hungary, which he regarded as sanctified by law and tradition and unassailable as a dogma. In this belief he felt himself in harmony with those most conservative instincts of his race, which he embodied, though he failed to advance them to a position where they would have been better secured against attack in the forthcoming unequal struggle with the surrounding peoples. Tisza was a thoroughly representative man, and therefore his policy, which was always rather of a broad-minded order, was somewhat out of tune with the times. He was convinced of the justice and necessity of the preponderance of the Hungarian nation as the foundation of the state, and he should certainly not be reproached for this to-day, when we see that after the "war of liberation" all the victory states, great and small, are being organised on the principle of the "leading nation" having the authority.

Tisza overlooked one thing, that his policy, whether sound or not, had become impracticable during the period of his political activity. The disposition of forces in the country had gradually shifted, especially under the influence of neighbouring national states, who followed the general trend of the time and were obviously influenced by catch-words invented abroad. It was quite possible to fail for a long time to appreciate the significance of these tendencies if one regarded the leaders of the nationalities merely as agitators, seeking to seduce

the people, who in a mass were completely loyal to the state, and as being either mere fanatics, or prompted by political ambition and selfish aims, and not as representatives of the real feelings of their fellow-nationalists. The state has the power to protect the existing order against internal and external attack, only the necessary steps were not taken to secure that the existing order should maintain itself of its own equilibrium, when the forces of the state themselves had to fight for their existence.

It is not that there was any lack of advocates in Hungary of the measures necessary to further the development of the state ; but the framers of the Nationalities Law of 1869 had had more insight into the requirements of the time that was coming, than the governments which succeeded them, who were united even with the parties of the opposition on one point—not to carry this law into effect. Hungary had come to take up this attitude in her policy through a feeling of excess of power, which was not affected by the subsequent decrease in her strength.

All Hungarian governments felt the necessity for and introduced programmes of reform. They applied these to the nationalities too. Unfortunately they were generally without effect in this field because the former equality at law of all citizens disguised the element of national feeling at the root of the problem. The suggestions for the reform of the various parties offered too little and came too late ; they did not keep pace with the growing desire of the peoples for greater freedom of action. This is naturally much more apparent to-day than it was when the non-German speaking citizens were very much under-represented in Parliament. Tisza's nationalities policy differed only in degree and not in character from what had been traditional. He was sincere in professing the most friendly feelings for the

non-Magyar Hungarians, and he was determined to promote their cultural and economic prosperity in every way. He sought to recognise their sentiment and their racial interest, and wished to make them wholehearted supporters of the Hungarian idea of the state. He maintained close relations with the national leaders, and they all felt that he wanted what was best for them as he understood it. But at the same time this marked the limit to which his idea of the Hungarian state permitted him to meet them ; and Tisza's ideas of reform would not have obtained for the nationalities a say in political affairs corresponding to their numerical strength. Tisza's reform plans were still contained within the traditional structure of the Hungarian constitution. But this did not prove adequate to bring about a compromise with the nationalities, satisfactory to both parties.

This was brought home to Tisza, on the occasion of a very serious effort to reach an understanding with the discontented Hungarian Rumanians in 1916. The matter, however, did not lead to any *rapprochement* between the parties, although conducted in the most polite language. The Rumanians were not interested in what he was proposing to offer them, but only in what he felt compelled to withhold. Hungarian political circles became uneasy because they feared that Tisza would concede too much to the Rumanians ; on the other hand, the extent to which Tisza was prepared to meet them lost much of its value in the opinion of the Rumanians, owing to the fact that these conversations coincided with the period of our difficult relations with Rumania, and with the diplomatic attempts that we were making to induce the allied kingdom to co-operate in the war or at least to maintain a benevolent neutrality. The negotiations for concessions at home now gave a false impression of a *captatio bene-*

volentiæ of Rumania, and were therefore not appreciated very highly by the Rumanian leaders in Hungary, who were anyhow not satisfied with what one offered them. Moreover, Rumania attached very little value to our desire to conciliate her fellow-nationals in Hungary, at a time when we were requiring favours of Rumania which she was not at all disposed to grant, or at any rate not at a price which was far from representing her desires or her hopes. Rumania was no longer keenly interested in Hungarian reform in Siebenbürgen, which she did not wish to see pacified, but to annex.

Thus all these well-meant efforts petered out.

During the course of the negotiations I had been at great pains to ensure that Tisza's attempt, which I followed with the best wishes though with little hope, should maintain the character of a purely internal Hungarian affair. Only as long as we impressed Rumania could we have any effect upon her. It was not long before we felt we had to deal with something more than the shadow of a power protecting her fellow-nationals. It was too late for reforms. It was a matter of protecting one's own territory against foreign conquest. If we succeeded in this, the all-too-long-delayed task of internal reconstruction would be all the more pressing.

Even more typical of Tisza's nationalities policy was the manner in which he dealt with the Croat-Slovene affairs. He took a firm stand upon the Settlement of 1867 and believed that the destinies also of those territories of St. Stephen's Crown could be securely anchored upon it for all time. Now, the Act of Settlement consisted of a permanent section affecting constitutional relations and an alterable section which was subject to periodical revision by the Regnicular Deputations.

In the course of years diametrically opposite views as to the relations arising out of the Settlement were

evolved in Hungary and in Croatia. Hungary felt satisfied with the newly-created "autonomous" relationship which the Croats themselves had recognised in the "White Paper" handed to them for signature; the Croats were supremely dissatisfied with the "niggardliness" of the self-government which they had attained, and especially with the practical execution of the settlement. Hence arose discontent, complaints, recriminations, endless negotiations and even concessions, which however did not go to the root of the difficulty. A condition of political and economic discontent in Croatia and Slavonia resulted, which, constantly seeking fresh fields of activity, felt an easy confidence in the possession of the Settlement Act of 1868 and was not always accorded the attention it deserved.

I cannot here give even a summary of the Croatian-Hungarian relations. Both sides indulged too much in party politics and too little in real politics. At the time of the outbreak of war the position was as follows: The Union idea was weakening and the Greater Croatia idea was gaining ground; the result was strong opposition to the Serb-Croat coalition in the Diet, which was the governing organ in the country, but was practically under Serbian leadership. With Serbia, with whom the Croat-Serbs sympathised almost openly, we were at war. The Croats felt they were being pushed into the background. It must be admitted that they fought with the greatest valour during the war; but they therefore gained greatly in national self-assurance, and Hungary, seeing that her "sister nation" was concerned, should have drawn the logical inferences.

Conditions in Croatia engaged Tisza's closer attention, as was indeed inevitable. He was especially concerned about the increased enmity between the Croatian and the Serbian element in the country, which he assumed was being artificially fomented also by the attitude of

certain military quarters. This led him to seek an audience with the sovereign on the 18th February 1915, in which he dealt exhaustively with the political situation in Croatia. He admitted that changes must be introduced and summed up his views as to what was necessary in the following words :

“ The mere maintenance of peace and order in these countries requires that the prestige of the government should be constantly maintained, and that the military authorities should dutifully support it. This is still more necessary from the point of view of paving the way for the satisfactory development of political conditions in the future.

“ A firm but just régime must be introduced, not based upon national hatred and not aimed at superseding and suppressing one nationality by another ; it should gather together all the well-disposed elements to protect all that is greatest and best in what the state stands for, cause justice to be done to each man, give friendly support to the peaceful citizen, and with impartial severity render harmless all activities against the existing order.

“ All loyal and politically more advanced elements must be gathered together within a new party, which would seek to advance the economic and cultural development of all the inhabitants of the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia along the lines of the existing Constitution. The existing order of things in the state must be protected against every attack, and the Greater Serbia agitation must be rendered harmless by appropriate measures affecting the church, education, and material development.”

These were golden words, true and apt, but they achieved nothing, for they were not followed up by any concrete proposals. “ Peace and order,” “ progress,” “ firmness,” “ justice,” “ well-disposed elements,” “ all

that was best and noblest in the state," "existing order of things," "appropriate measures," and "a new party to be formed of all loyal and politically more advanced elements." All these came to nothing. Peace and order were maintained by war measures, but political conditions were left to their own confusion. Even so acute a head of a government, absolutely devoted to his task, as Tisza was, failed to tackle such a pressing problem, closely bound up with the causes of the war, as was the Serb-Croat problem, but only patched it up with the temporary resources of daily routine because he did not wish to recognise that there was any problem.

I constantly called attention to the fact, as in less critical circumstances I had already done in the course of my administrative activities in Bosnia, that the Southern Slav question had entered upon a new phase in its development and that we were concerned, not only with the activities of agitators, but with changes in the psychology of the people; there was no element of hostility to the dynasty or to the state in them, but their nature must be clearly recognised lest they should assume this character.

But this was where the lacuna was. As in other territories of the monarchy, the centre did not know what conditions were like on the circumference. Budapest was, generally speaking, exceedingly ill-informed on Croatian affairs. This was due to the apparatus of government in the Croat-Slovene territories, which, from the point of view of Budapest, functioned as an instrument of Hungarian policy, but was felt in Croatia as something foreign to be ignored where practicable. Hungary made a point of adhering to the forms of law, but left the internal political ferment, concerning which there was a good deal of concealment, to its own devices. In this respect Tisza was no better off than his predecessor. His sources of information, excepting the

routine official kind, were scanty. He took little account of the deep organic changes which were taking place. I often surprised him with information regarding Southern Slav matters, which did not fit into the picture he had made, in which political agitators played the principal part, seeking to corrupt the people whose sentiments were otherwise all that could be desired. I endeavoured to prove that the time had come to revise the conditions of settlement for the sake of the Croats themselves, in order to protect them against the pressure of Serbian influences, and for the sake of Hungary, who needed to have friendly and reliable relations with Croatia for her own security. There was a difference between us, in that Tisza preferred to regard the Settlement of 1868 as a non-alterable defence of the relations between the metropolis and the daughter country, whereas I advocated that a revision should not be absolutely confined within the text of the treaty if this should militate against the achievement of really good relations.

Even before the war, after Serbia's great successes in the Balkan wars, the problem had so far matured that the unification of all Croats within a wider framework had become inevitable. The world war, however it might end, could not alter this fact. And this union was not to imply hostile opposition to the Serbs, but was to constitute the protection and salvation of the Croat people living side by side with the Serbs as a consolidating element in the whole monarchy, especially Hungary. The catastrophe of the autumn of 1918 has united with the Serbs all the Croats, outside the old association, which has been torn up. In this union, which Austria-Hungary ought to have granted them at the right moment, the Croats who cannot give up their separate nationality will have to defend it against Serbian attempts to dominate and assimilate them, unless all appearances are deceptive.

The second point in which I differed from Tisza's view concerns Serbia. I must say in advance that we completely agreed that even in the event of the most successful termination of the war we would not annex Serbian territory, apart perhaps from a strategically necessary adjustment of the boundary. But Tisza was permeated with the old conservative-agrarian conviction that the most important, not merely economic but also political, interests of Hungary required the most elaborate protection for the essential products of her agriculture. Now, it is not my intention to criticise this article of faith or even to question it. But I must state in this connection the well-known fact that Hungary's prohibition of imports from the Balkan States, especially Serbia, directly resulted in serious difficulties in our Balkan policy. If we wished to divert these states from ambition that could only be satisfied at our expense, we would have to go a long way to meet them where their material interests were concerned. Our failure to do so would not only profoundly affect the welfare of every individual producer in the Balkans, but would also provide an excellent handle for every political agitation against us. This applied especially to Serbia, where economic distress and political aspiration, industriously encouraged by Russia, finally culminated in a paroxysm of hatred against the monarchy. Such was the state of affairs before the war.

Tisza maintained that same reserve in economic questions as before, regarding the settlement of our future relations with Serbia, which he wished to maintain as much as I did; he believed that he still ought to use the same methods to protect Hungary's agricultural products from the competition of imports from the Balkans, although experience had shown that the monarchy could no longer meet its own requirements of cereals and cattle, and that Hungary would eagerly

assimilate the imports from Serbia and would turn them fully into account by exporting her own valuable products in return and consuming what she imported ; as well as through the industries dealing with partly manufactured goods. This should take place without damage to the home producer, and to the greatest benefit of the consumer.

In all essential political questions affecting the future of Austria-Hungary Tisza and I had generally absolutely identical views. This fact, and the absolute frankness and simplicity of his character, made it easy to make progress in one's work with him, if one possessed his confidence. Differences of opinion such as arose between us in questions of foreign affairs were always easily dealt with by argument. If such arguments were sound and one was clear as to what one wanted oneself, he was not unamenable to conviction. This was especially so in the Polish question, in which Tisza's opinions underwent many changes, though he was always concerned to preserve the dualism of Austria-Hungary in our future relations with Poland. But I always succeeded, after going thoroughly into the matter, and thus clearing up my own ideas too, as they gradually developed with changing circumstances, in obtaining his approval of my Polish policy.

It is not within the scope of this book to give a full appreciation of Tisza as statesman, parliamentarian, and speaker. Nobody now fails to appreciate his importance. The homeric abuse which rained upon him in the parliamentary battles was a kind of recognition of his power. Even his most bitter opponents never ventured to cast aspersions upon his exceptional gifts, his purity of character, his chivalrous nature, and his ardent patriotism.

It was my privilege to see him engaged in a field that

was comparatively new to him, and in which he nevertheless displayed brilliant gifts. In the practice of his constitutional duty to assist in determining foreign policy, he displayed as great a power of rapidly summing up the problems as of dealing with them in an enlightened manner. A discussion with him always brought out useful points of view. When he put forward views in which it was impossible to share, it was clear that they did not result from mistaken conclusions, but that in his premises he could not get outside of the circle of ideas, the bounds of which were for him dogmatically defined, and could not be transgressed without harm to his country. He was conservative to his finger-tips in a world whose violently progressive movement he regarded as pernicious for his country, which was as yet not strong enough to assimilate them.

He considered that he was acting rashly if he ever made a concession to the more impetuous demands of the time. In his nature he was far from being a reformer ; and this fact gives the key to the two sides of his peculiar political personality. His strength lay in ruling. He was a born leader. To administer and maintain the estate of his fatherland as he had taken it over, to let it develop and to protect it, was his business. Through his energy and ability he succeeded in getting the highest possible result from existing institutions. He had no wish to alter them. His ambition was to raise them to a higher level of effectiveness. He ventured only reluctantly to yield even to the most urgent requirements of reform ; and then it was often too little or too late. He loved his people and idealised them ; only they were sometimes too restless for his almost patriarchal concern for them. His character was such that he desired quiet, regular progress ; but the times were moving too rapidly, and Hungary was not alone upon an Island of the Blest. Things developed too

quickly for Tisza. He did not know how to arrest their progress.

Tisza was most concerned to cultivate our relations with Germany. A convinced and stalwart adherent of the alliance, he himself did all he could to establish it in the hearts of the people. He kept in personal touch with the leading men in Germany, where he was a welcome guest, and was sometimes requested to take part in informal discussions. This gave an opportunity for ascertaining that his political views were in complete harmony with those of other responsible quarters, and this was of great use to me in my work in Germany, when it was a matter of bridging over difficulties. Whilst most anxious to promote the political alliance with Germany, his attitude was much more reserved in the matter of commercial unity. He did not join in the cry of "Mitteleuropa," which was so popular for a time. The Hungarian point of view in this matter was at the time fairly strongly opposed to the Austrian, and especially to the very exalted German-Austrian sentiments. I had to maintain an attitude of neutrality, as this matter implied a previous understanding between the two states of the monarchy which at the time was unattainable. The enthusiasm of the one side and the opposition of the other cooled down; both governments began the negotiations, for which the time had come, for the renewal of the Austro-Hungarian agreement; when I left the Foreign Office the negotiations were dragging on and were not at a very promising stage. There was at that time a considerable difference of opinion regarding the cattle duties, which was typical of the narrowness of the old agrarian policy, and clearly presaged danger of economic difficulties in the future, similar to those with our Balkan neighbours to which I have referred above.

In my efforts, which were directed towards possi-

bilities of peace, I always found strong and loyal support in the Hungarian Prime Minister. The first half-year of the war was entirely devoted to saving ourselves from the terrible Russian onslaught. At that time our one concern was necessarily regarding means of defence. After Gorlice and our ensuing victorious advance, Tisza and I began to gain confidence in a successful termination to the war, a confidence which the course of events unhappily failed to justify. But even at that time we understood by a successful end to the war, not the annihilation of the enemy, which could not but seem unattainable to sober judgment, but such a measure of military success as would cause our enemies to come to an understanding with us upon a basis which would secure our existence and world peace.

The prospect of realising this aim was certainly a little more hopeful. When, after many vicissitudes of war, we made our peace move of December 1916, in other and apparently favourable circumstances, I had the warmest support both of Tisza and of the Austrian government.

CHAPTER XV

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY'S BALKAN POLICY

WHEN I resigned from the Foreign Office, the Emperor Carl offered me the Joint Finance Ministry, that is, the administration of Bosnia-Herzegovina. I was pleased to return to a sphere of activity in which I had been engaged for eight and a half years and had found much interest and pleasure in the work.

For the development of these countries I had introduced radical measures, the scheme of which was then suddenly interrupted. Soon after I left in 1912, the Greater Serbia agitation was set in motion in Bosnia-Herzegovina on an intensive scale, and after the Serbian successes in the Balkan war, was scarcely at pains to conceal its aims. It employed all possible methods of seduction and intimidation upon its fellow-nationals on the other side of the frontier.

When the crime committed on Bosnian territory on the 28th June 1914 set events in motion, and Bosnia-Herzegovina accordingly became a theatre of war, it again became apparent, as it had often been in the past, how inseparably the Bosnian question was bound up with the whole scheme of our general interest in the Balkans.

The Near Eastern policy of the Habsburg monarchy is a long and complicated chapter in the history of South-eastern Europe. Even in the very cursory survey which is all that I can attempt here, it will perhaps be possible to show how it was that a Power which for centuries was compelled, not merely for reasons of prestige but for motives of self-preservation, to concern itself continuously with Balkan affairs in all their phases, could, in spite of achieving splendid military successes and carrying through a great amount of diplomatic and civilising work and great political conceptions, get into a position where these factors, instead of bringing it an apparently certain success, caused its downfall.

When it acquired the crown of Hungary, the House of Habsburg also took over her Near Eastern policy, and applied all its power to carrying it forward. It had been the historic task of this policy to check the advance of Turkish invasion towards the west and to regain those allies of European civilisation which had been lost in battle. The first part of this duty was fulfilled in the liberation of Vienna, in which Poland played a prominent part, and in the recapture of Ofen, in which the Germans rendered effective assistance.

At that time the Turkish empire had passed the zenith of its power and had lost the impetus which had inspired such terror ; but it still wanted the whole eighteenth century to force it back approximately to the boundaries of the old Byzantine empire, and to free the greater portion of the territory of St. Stephen's Crown.

It was almost at the end of this great period of battles that the imperial armies met the Russian columns which, advancing against the Turkish possessions on the Black Sea, had reached the Danube.

Almost as soon as Austrian and Russian policy in the Balkans came into contact, their tendencies began to seek opposite ends. Turkey had become a state which, though still of great territorial extent, was deprived of its power of expansion, and she was only concerned with ruling herself as best she could and with maintaining her possessions. This quietism to which Turkey had resigned herself in her old age was disturbed by the advancing wave set in motion by French revolutionary ideas. Towards the end of the century dim efforts at reform began to be made, even amongst the Mohammedans. The ferment was principally active amongst the Christian nationalities of the Balkan Peninsula. The early beginnings were modest and timid and at first confined to domestic affairs, though they soon had important political developments.

The Sublime Porte was at first little troubled by these signs of the times. It had a fatalistic confidence in its armed domination over the defenceless subjugated dominions. When the picked troops of the Janissaries, which consisted principally of kidnapped Christian children, were beginning to get restive, they were destroyed and superseded by a purely Turkish army. The rest could be left to a few "reformirades" who proclaimed new maxims of government but were able to effect little change in existing conditions.

For Austria and Russia this period was the turning-point in their policy towards Turkey. Russia was consistently pursuing the path which she had followed since the time of Peter the Great and which led towards the Straits, but since she had reached the Danube principalities Turkey was no longer the only obstacle in the path.

The northern empire came into conflict with rival claims of the neighbouring Powers of Austria and Prussia, with whom she had to come to terms. Austria disputed with her the possession of Moldavia and Wallachia; that country's aspirations, following Prince Eugène's policy as carried on by Prince Kaunitz, comprised the northern portions of the retreating Turkish empire—the Danube principalities, Serbia, and Bosnia. These ambitions were side-tracked for the moment as the Danube principalities did not fall either to Russia or Austria, but remained in Turkish possession, while Austria was compensated with a part of Poland at the partition.

But as early as 1772 a new Austro-Russian project for the partition of Turkey cropped up, although it never took a definite form and was only discussed diplomatically. In any case Maria Theresa definitely rejected this idea in 1777, having begun to perceive what would henceforward be the right policy for her states to adopt

towards a Turkey who had ceased to be dangerous (Letter to Count Mercy-Argenteau, 31st July 1777).

Nevertheless Russia pursued her aim without faltering. Maria Theresa had scarcely passed away when Russia found that the romantic nature of the Emperor Joseph II responded easily to her suggestion. While the Empress was still alive, Joseph had concurred with the Empress Catherine at their meeting at Mohilev (May 1780) in her intention again to set up the cross on Santa Sofia.

The year 1782 saw Joseph II and Catherine II engage in active negotiations for driving out the Turk and setting up a great empire in Constantinople and a state of Dacia. But France's determined opposition brought these plans to naught. They were not expressly dropped ; and the close agreement between Catherine and Joseph in oriental affairs lasted till the Emperor's death.

From that time onwards Austria regarded and treated Turkey as a safe and quiet and therefore very valuable neighbour, and regarded the good understanding with her as the best security for the south-eastern boundaries of the Habsburg states.

Metternich says : " European Turkey offers Austria all the negative advantages of a sea border." It was he, too, who developed the policy of maintaining the old Ottoman empire in her possessions, into a system which for very many years was the determining factor of Austria's Near Eastern policy with his successors in office too.

It was not that Metternich failed to perceive the serious internal abuses in Turkey and the profound unrest amongst her Christian subjects who had been deprived of their rights. But he considered, as he says in his Memoirs, that " the continued existence of the Ottoman throne, though it offers many anomalies to Christian civilisation, is a benefit to Europe." At the

same time he did not overlook the possibility of an upheaval in the Near East and takes this eventuality into account. "If a great independent Christian state were to replace Turkish rule, that state would be our natural and active ally." In a report dated 21st January 1808, when Metternich was still ambassador in Paris, he even wrote to his government: "We cannot save Turkey. We must therefore co-operate in her partition and seek to obtain as large a portion as possible."

As Chancellor, Metternich no longer maintained any such proviso; the maintenance of Turkey in Europe came to be an axiom of his policy which took its logical place in his general European system of maintaining things as they were.

But this conservative policy in the Near East, which was determined by the ideas ruling at the time and by her relations with the Western Powers, placed Austria at an essential disadvantage in relation to Russia, which affected the whole future development of the Balkan problem.

While Austria's policy was now directed to maintaining the integrity of Turkey, Russia consistently pursued the one main object of driving Turkey out of Europe and achieving the domination of the Straits and the Black Sea.

The decisive ascendancy of Russian policy was due to the fact that it was in accord with the progressive decay of Turkey, and was favoured by the natural tendency of the Ottoman Empire to disintegrate through the development of the individual races in the Balkans, the reawakening of the national restiveness of the Christians, and the quietism of the Turks; whereas Austrian policy always had to work against the current, and in virtue of its principles had to prop up the decadent régime of the Ottoman Empire and check the emancipation of that dominion, which was again reawakening to national consciousness.

It made little difference that Russia, in the course of her policy between two Turkish wars which cost that country considerable portions of her territory, in deference to the requirements of her European interests, pledged herself to maintain Turkey; or that Austria, on the other hand, in the end accepted the results of great movements such as the Serbian and the Greek risings, which she had done her best to subdue. In the Balkans all the confusion of the long wars, the peace congresses, and the political activities of the representatives of the rival Powers, crystallised into the simple formula, which was firmly imprinted on everybody's consciousness: Austria is *for* Turkey, Russia is *against* her. If at any point Russia failed to render the expected assistance, it was "because her regard for the other Powers forced her to wait."

The underlying motive pervading Russia's Balkan policy was the northern empire's striving to obtain satisfactory boundaries and to have access to the open sea. In pursuing this policy she was able to make a powerful appeal to sentiment, first in the community of religion with the Christian subjects of the Sultan, and later, when Rumania and Greece were already freed, to her community of race with the Balkan Slavs. That is to say, first orthodoxy and then pan-Slavism. In both these feelings Austria was unable, not only on account of Turkey but also on account of her own internal struggles, to compete with Germany.

Austria adhered to her policy of maintaining the existing integrity of the Turkish Empire until the middle of the nineteenth century, and the Crimean war found her, if only half-heartedly, in the camp of those Powers which defended Turkey against Russia and of the Powers which had already forced Turkey to recognise the independence of the Danube principalities, Serbia and Greece. A galvanised Turkey dressed up to the European

model was received into the European concert by the Treaty of Paris, and her old and new friends who had saved her from Russia now expected that through a timely reorganisation of her institutions she would make a serious attempt to take her place on an equal footing in the European community of states.

Though Austria had not been able and had not even attempted to compete with the Russian policy of orthodoxy and community of race, a third great field of activity in the Near East was opened to her, on which she could and would have to enter into successful competition with Russia, who had received a temporary set-back, unless, failing to appreciate the demands of the situation, she was prepared to see the changed conditions again developing to the disadvantage of the internal and external interest of the monarchy.

Our internal developments and the changes in the Near East came to be more clearly related to each other and to indicate to any person of insight the direction in which the monarchy's attitude to the Near Eastern problem was bound to develop in the future. There were two main factors forcing the Power, which in the meantime through the Settlement of 1867 had been converted into the dualistic monarchy of Austria-Hungary, finally to forsake the paths of Metternich's diplomacy and Maria Theresa's military frontier, and to build up other and more reliable guarantees against any danger that might arise from the Near East.

Modern methods of transport had done more and more to wake up the Near East and to make it accessible. Austria-Hungary could now profit more extensively from the natural advantage of proximity and leave Russia, whose external trade was still of small account, in the cold. But this was not merely a matter of commercial gain, a most important consideration for the

monarchy, but was a political necessity. Anybody who has done important business with the Near East has always obtained political influence there, and the monarchy could not neglect to make every effort to secure the interest and the sympathies of all Balkan peoples, through the unexceptional means of active commercial relations.

The Habsburg monarchy could maintain her traditional friendship and political support with Turkey, who was endeavouring, with the more or less disinterested assistance of the Powers signatory to the Treaty of Paris, to purify herself of abuses ; but she could not fail to appreciate that the disintegrating process which had started at the beginning of the century with the rise of Christian states in the Balkans, would not cease and could not be stopped by the interference of other Powers.

Austria-Hungary's concern was, in conjunction with the other Powers, not forcibly to check the process of the emancipation of the non-Turkish subjects of the Ottoman Empire, which was being completed steadily if slowly, but to keep it within those limits which seemed likely to preserve her own vital interests and the peace of that portion of the globe.

In endeavouring to deal with this problem, Austria-Hungary was in a still more difficult position than the Western Powers, since the most important of those peoples whose future fate was concerned lived close to her frontiers, and had fellow-countrymen within the monarchy whose feeling could not be left out of account ; whereas the other Powers, apart from Russia, could judge and deal with the Balkan problem more from the dispassionate standpoint of the balance of power, and their commercial interests, which were principally concentrated on the problem of the Straits.

Since the subject peoples of the Balkan Peninsula had again begun to be stirred by national feelings, the

Habsburg monarchy, by reason of its own structure, had entered upon a fateful phase in its history, the dangers of which it had for a long time thought it could eliminate by maintaining close association with Turkey and through its own resources. After some vacillation of her policy towards the Serbs, Austria managed to withdraw from any interference with the national aspirations of the Serbs and Greeks at the beginning of the nineteenth century. She took her stand upon the principle of legitimacy, merely recognising the *fait accompli* of the armed intervention of Russia and the Western Powers, which was very prejudicial to her prestige among the Balkan peoples.

The second half of the nineteenth century, after the upheaval of 1848, had brought to the surface all the nationalities problems in Austria-Hungary, after the years of absolutism which had created a short period of apparent tranquillity. The mutual reactions between national movements within the monarchy and similar efforts of emancipation in Turkey were intensified to a point where it became inevitable, on the one hand partially to rearrange the mosaic of peoples within the monarchy to correspond with the altered disposition of forces, and on the other hand to take up a definite attitude in our foreign policy towards the changes which were taking place in Turkey.

The Settlement of 1867 did not in itself solve the internal problems. It did justice to the outstanding claims of a political-historical nature, but through the dualism it replaced the former single hegemony by a double one and left it to the two states in the monarchy themselves to settle their nationalities problems. They were dealt with in accordance with Article 19 of the Law of the Austrian Constitution and with the Hungarian Nationalities Law of 1869. Though in essential points neither law was fully carried into effect, they both

indicate what at that time was considered indispensable for preserving national peace at home.

The nationalities policy had entered upon a path which it did not dare to follow further.

Foreign policy, too, was soon to be put to the test of great decisions. In the early seventies there was great ferment amongst the Christians in the east and west of North Turkey. Risings in Bulgaria and Bosnia Herzegovina caused Russia and Austria-Hungary, the Powers most closely concerned, to make representations to the Sublime Porte and led to the Russo-Turkish war, in which Austria-Hungary remained neutral but before which, through the Convention of Reichstadt (1875), she secured that degree of authority in the settlement of the affairs of Bosnia-Herzegovina which was essential in view of her special interests.

This was an exceptionally cleverly devised and skilfully conducted piece of work of Count Andrassy ; it showed our Balkan policy at the height of its difficult and complicated task. It resulted in Austria-Hungary's neutrality in the Russo-Turkish war, but saved Turkey. On the other hand, it made it possible for the monarchy itself to maintain order amongst the neighbouring states if Turkey should not succeed in doing so. Austria-Hungary undertook the protection of the oppressed Christian inhabitants of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and as such protection could not otherwise be effectively exercised under the conditions created by the Turkish defeat, the monarchy received under the Treaty of Berlin the European mandate for occupying and administering those provinces, whilst in the East the principality of Bulgaria and the autonomous province of Austrumelia were set up.

The Congress of Berlin, whose task it was to restore peace to Europe through the decisions of the Great

Powers, endeavoured to do so by solutions which were of an obviously provisional character, and could still be reached in agreement with the Powers without endangering the main purpose of their consultations. The peace treaty did not achieve a final conclusion, but was necessarily the starting-point for new developments, some of which indeed proceeded with extraordinary speed.

The Balkan crisis of 1875-1878 had ended in two most important intermediate solutions of the Treaty of Berlin : Austria-Hungary's occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the organisation of Bulgaria in two administrative territories with distinct rights under a Turkish overlordship.

That was the extent of Count AndrÁssy's achievement in exploiting the possibilities of the Congress of Berlin in the interests of Austria-Hungary. It was the duty of his successor and of all the departments concerned to consolidate what he had won, and to lay down definite lines for Austria-Hungary's Near Eastern policy, adapted to the constant changes in the Balkan Peninsula, if the monarchy was to have any consistent Near Eastern policy at all and was not to be the sport of developments, within and without, imperfectly observed and appreciated.

The factors governing its Near Eastern policy were determined at any moment by the changing structure of the Habsburg Empire.

The Balkan problems, which were submerged only when the Turkish Empire was at the height of its power, were constant sources of difficulty to its neighbour. The movements in the Balkan Peninsula were not confined within its boundaries ; they overflowed in every direction. The Turkish inroads brought multitudes of refugees into Hungarian and Croatian territory, where

they founded settlements. The armies of Prince Eugène and Prince Khevenhüller bore not only the Emperor's standards, but also the hope of liberation to the Turkish Christians. The expectations of the latter were therefore naturally directed to the Christian Empire as being the traditional enemy of the Ottoman Power which was oppressing them but was now growing weaker.

I have indicated above the reason why these expectations were not fulfilled. The Northern Empire, which was extending its power and its frontiers, assumed the rôle of liberator for its own purposes, whereas Austria had no luck with her Turkish protégée, whom she only gradually forced within her narrower frontiers, while the Christian nationalities constantly grew in political importance.

Whether Austria's Near Eastern policy of the Metternich era and of the period up to the Bosnia-Herzegovina imbroglio was mistaken or merely unfortunate need not concern us, in considering its later application, after it had taken over, in the Treaty of Berlin, the responsibility for the fate of two important Turkish provinces, and after Russia had set herself to establish a secure base on the road to the Straits by establishing a dominating influence in Bulgaria.

The task now suddenly became clear and comprehensible. The inconsistencies which had formerly afflicted Austria-Hungary's policy when she was torn between the axiom of "Turkey's integrity" and the national interests of peoples clamouring to be freed, were resolved. Almost all Christian peoples in the Balkan Peninsula were now liberated, and European Turkey now merely constituted one, though the most important, of many Balkan states. It is true that the boundaries of the various states were not yet finally defined, but there was no longer so great a conflict of

principle, and opposition to the aims of Russian policy would in the future appear in a quite different light, much more favourable to our Balkan interests. If Russia had previously been the Power that liberated one Balkan state after another from the Turkish yoke, she was now engaged in securing a preponderating influence in the Balkan states, especially in Bulgaria, while her gaze was still fixed as though hypnotised upon Constantinople. Austria, on the other hand, had no need to pursue any other policy than to stand out for the independence of the Balkan states, including Turkey, and to leave them to settle those questions which concerned themselves.

The Balkans for the Balkan peoples.—not therefore for us, but also not for Russia. The *au dela de Mitrovica*, which for a time intrigued not a few, could never be the guiding maxim of the aims of the monarchy in a military or political sense, but only in an economic sense, in which it must embrace the whole Balkan Peninsula impartially.

The final conclusion of these premises seemed to be a quite simple one for the policy of Austria-Hungary: to set herself to win their sympathy and confidence, and to make herself count commercially in all the Balkan states.

Natural though it was that the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, consisting as it did of a group of small nationalities and in virtue of its geographical position, should assume this rôle, there were considerable difficulties in carrying it out. The relations of the Balkan states to one another provided additional obstacles; and Russia never ceased in her endeavours to discover in the Balkans the archimedean point through which she could push aside Austria-Hungary, who stood in the way of her schemes.

Austria-Hungary's Near Eastern policy therefore

constituted a task easily comprehensible as far as concerned the objects in view, but full of difficulties in execution.

Austria-Hungary herself, considered as a unit for external action, was often placed in an awkward dilemma in Balkan questions. The dualism which had lessened the occasions of friction internally, created new ones externally, and owing to the numerous conflicts between the Austrian and the Hungarian point of view, certainly did not make for decision and adaptability in foreign policy. Agreements were often achieved in a merely negative sense. Half measures and omissions were the natural consequence.

All the arguments as to the necessity for maintaining friendly relations throughout the Balkans could not alter the fact that certain Balkan states, such as Rumania, Serbia, and Montenegro, desired our territory; all the solemn declarations to the contrary during periods of friendly relations, treaties, and even alliances made no difference to this fact. Foresight and the patient expectation of opportunities determined the policy of these states.

Bulgaria and Greece had no ambitions to fulfil at the expense of Austria-Hungary. The friendliest relations with them were only natural, especially with Bulgaria, since Russia's dominating influence had been eliminated in that country, largely through our assistance and not without lapses.

Our interests therefore led us to maintain the general conditions on the Balkan Peninsula, in Constantinople, Sofia, Athens, and Sarajevo, against Bukarest, Belgrade, and Cetinje.

Did this necessitate our pursuing a policy provocative to the latter? Not at all. But it required us to keep our eyes open, to give up all our illusions, to see that our power was not underestimated, to establish as

extensive connections as possible in order at any rate to deprive them of the excuse for their greed.

It was within the monarchy, however, that the principal problems had to be solved. These did not fall within the department of foreign policy and were exclusively subject to the judgment of the internal departments, which seldom perceived in time that the maintenance at home of certain conditions which were affected by the great national movement, might cause serious danger abroad.

The Foreign Office might exert a pacifying influence, or point out the impropriety of interfering in the internal affairs of a foreign state, and refuse to take any part in the nationalities question. And that is of course what happened ; but this did not achieve much. What was wanted was an internal policy which would deprive the discontented nationalities of any occasion, of any wish, and also of any possibility of seeking foreign sympathies.

But what were the actual conditions in the monarchy ?

A state can come to terms with dissident nationalities only by suppressing or by satisfying them. Since the former is not merely reprehensible but at the present state of development is impossible for any length of time, the only means left of placing the joint citizenship on a satisfactory basis in states in which various peoples live side by side, is to grant those who speak another language all those liberties which are necessary to deprive them of the feeling that they are at a disadvantage as regards the members of the dominating or more numerous people.

Now, internal policy both in Austria and Hungary almost always took a middle course between these two methods, and satisfied nobody.

With reference to the remark in the Entente's covering Note to the Hungarian Peace Treaty of the 5th May 1920,

that a state of affairs which has been in existence even for a thousand years should not be allowed to continue if it is contrary to what is just, it is not superfluous to remark that the policy of Austria and of Hungary never deliberately aimed at persecuting or oppressing any nationality. During the period of great differences in culture and in power, there resulted an arrangement of social and national grades which for long epochs were accepted as a matter of course, as were similar developments in other states. This was not felt to be oppressive until the originating causes, such as the right of conquest or the protection afforded, no longer satisfied the general sense of justice.

None of the actual relationships between the nationalities and the Habsburg states was in itself reprehensible. The history of them does not consist chiefly of struggles between the different peoples. In many cases they lived in complete agreement for centuries. The relationships between them only became difficult and indeed unbearable when deep changes, cultural progress, and the new needs of one part could not obtain fair recognition, and when conditions were unduly maintained after the reasons for them had disappeared. The *beati possedentes* clung, as everywhere else in the world, tenaciously to their position. This was not merely due to selfishness, but to their inherited conviction that the good of their country depended on their doing so. In some cases when internal policy was oppressed by crises of nationalism, the necessity for radical changes was perceived and this was rewarded by the consolidation of relationships. In other cases it was not perceived, or not until too late, since even among the nationalist element most closely concerned, the desire for reform, which had first expressed itself in vague aspirations, only gradually crystallised into extensive and definite demands.

A tendency to maintain existing conditions up to the utmost limit of what was tenable, a far too grudging appraisal of inevitable concessions to irresistible movements, and administrative practice which in the eyes of the various peoples did not always seem to bear out that equality of justice which was in accordance with the spirit of the law, constituted the main features of those phases of the nationalities policy on either side of the Leitha—problems which furnished a convenient handle for foreign agitators whose activities often led to internal complications.

This is meant to be a simple statement of fact, borne out by the final catastrophe, and not a criticism of the shortcomings of internal policy. All the governments which succeeded one another in Austria and Hungary had to deal with the nationalities problem, either by legislation or in the course of administration, and endeavoured in good faith to solve the problem of reconciling the necessities of the state and the rights of the people, unity of power and national freedom of expression. Yet the governors, as the protectors of the existing order, naturally took their stand upon the ground of what had historically come to be, from which one was now to depart as far as circumstances appeared to render necessary—a duty very difficult to gauge, for any gift seems greater to the giver than to him who receives it.

The historical bases constituted the strength of the monarchy. A definite decision was necessary to depart from them even in a single point, and it needed exceptional political foresight or the unmistakable warning of the pressure of new forces to give the proper scope for internal reform. In Austria, in addition to the state there were the historical and political entities of the Crown territories which possessed a certain administrative autonomy, but which did not correspond to the districts settled by the nationalities, and therefore were

more of an obstacle than an assistance in the way of national agreement.

In Hungary, as far as the nationalities were concerned, you had the amorphous condition of a homogeneous centralised administrative system. There was technical equality which satisfied the sense of justice of the leading nations, but which through the play of existing institutions of the state created difficulties of a material and practical nature which were felt as oppressive by the nationalities. Thus, for instance, owing to the geographical arrangement of the constituencies, their representation in parliament was far inferior to their actual numbers.

The general trend of civilisation in Hungary—the increasing predominance of Hungarian characteristics and the development of the state—has somewhat obscured our realisation of the powerful tendencies of the time towards the increasing self-assertion on the part of all, even the smallest nationalities, tendencies which were all the more powerful in Hungary owing to the inferior proportion of Magyars to other nationalities in many parts of the kingdom, and to the fact that in the south and east these nationalities were subject to the influence of their fellow-countrymen in neighbouring states.

Hungary had built with confidence upon the firm foundation of the ancient historical structure which, it is true, had not become meaningless. Only one condition was necessary for its maintenance; and this condition had not been fulfilled in the Hungary of the latter period. It was to seal the country's fate. The condition was that a fundamental change should be made in her relations with the nationalities which in their mass were true to the state. Tentative steps in this direction such as were made from time to time were not sufficient. The nationalities took advantage of such

occasions as offered for bringing forward their claims, but they received little more than a reminder of the existing equality of law, which was just what they wanted to see more practically developed to correspond with their needs.

Certain leading politicians did not fail to perceive that the relationships with the nationalities constituted a great problem that was pressing for solution. But none of the parliamentary parties had either the courage or the will necessary for solving this problem. They cherished the delusion that the masses were untouched by the agitation, and it was only a few individual agitators or paid agents who attempted to seduce their fellow-nationals.

Moreover, they lulled themselves by their belief in the security of the ancient historical foundation, which was seldom disturbed by apprehensions as to the future.

Both in Austria and Hungary, although to a varying degree, the opposition of the nationalities to the measures regulating their relationships extended, and thanks to a certain slackness on the part of the administration they gained sufficient freedom in this matter. Moreover, neither in Austria nor in Hungary was the administrative machinery adapted to render the leading official circles fully alive to the changes in the distribution of forces, which were occurring in the interior. The reports reaching the governments as to the degree of tension in the territories of the various nationalities, were incomplete, as I was often able to ascertain, especially in the Southern Slav districts. Rosy reports from inferior officers, who had not their eyes open, or did not dare to pass on what they could easily have learned, tendentious statements by organs which wanted to conceal the true state, from motives of political partisanship, gave a false picture of the position. The serious warnings of sincere observers, on the other hand,

were often not regarded, or discounted as inconvenient pessimism.

Only thus is it to be explained that a condition of deep and extensive hostility to the idea of the state was revealed to the general public only a short time before the collapse. This condition gradually arose during the period of official inaction and false security. It was thought that it was a matter only of local difficulties, and not of profound changes in popular sentiment, to restrain which or to turn it into other channels little or nothing was done, excepting here and there to tackle the symptoms.

Noisy or incautious outbursts of impassioned agitators were severely dealt with. The determined and systematic work of those who carried on the campaign secretly, and more or less under the protection of the law while slipping through its meshes, developed unchecked, supported by the half-unconscious sentiment of the nationalist masses. The cumulative effect was unappreciated by governments which felt themselves and the state to be secure, or else lacked a programme.

At the time of the outbreak of war the nationalities were not yet fundamentally disloyal. Even the Czechs and Slovenes, who were the most dissatisfied, would not have severed the political connection if they had been granted the measure of self-government which they asked for. It is true that Prague would not have continued to allow herself to be administered as a province of Vienna.

There was never any doubt as to the conditional nature of Galicia's relation to Austria. This country would not have repudiated the connection as long as Poland did not exist. But from the moment when Russian rule came to an end in Warsaw, Galicia simply regarded herself as a part of Poland, and identified herself with the future destinies of that country.

The Italians of Tirol and the coast desired national autonomy, but they showed no impatience to tear themselves free of Austria. The Dalmatians and the Rumanians of Bukovina associated their ambitions with those of their far more numerous fellow-countrymen in Hungary.

The Hungarian Rumanians felt a universal desire to rid themselves of all hindrances to their national development; the patience and relative passivity of these people was apt to give a false impression of the extent of this desire. Conditions in the kingdom of Rumania had little attraction for our Rumanians. They wished to have their full equality, and to secure it by suitable regulations. Separatist tendencies played only a small part in their popular movement.

Of all the nationalities, the Slovaks were most closely bound up with the Hungarians. They felt little drawn to their Slavonic neighbours, the Czechs, the Poles, and the Ruthenians. Their national feeling, too, had been strongly developed, and they had many desires which were still unfulfilled. But they were completely loyal to the state. The idea of belonging to anybody else than to Hungary probably occurred to nobody amongst them, excepting a few literary persons and emigrants. Research among the records either of the present or of the past will fail to bring to light the account of any public demonstration demanding union with Bohemia.

As regards Croatia, I have already indicated that radical reform was required in order to restore the good relations of Hungary, which were essential to both parties.

If conditions there were duly to be settled in a manner which the interests of the monarchy and the Croatians required, the solution of the Dalmatian and the Bosnia-Herzegovina problems would have to be undertaken at the same time. But the solution of this problem could

not be arrived at without ascertaining the wishes of the population of these provinces.

It is not altogether certain what would have been the result of a popular vote of this kind. Dalmatia desired union with Croatia-Slavonia. Bosnia-Herzegovina desired self-government, whether as a separate administrative entity, or whether in union with Croatia or Serbia, opinions appeared to be divided. Nothing justified the assumption that the majority of the population would have pronounced in favour of union with Serbia.

The nationalities questions with Austria and Hungary, therefore, had reached a stage of development in the year 1914 which urgently required that they should be radically dealt with, and made further delay impossible.

Even without a war the nationalities in Austria, who were very powerful economically and culturally, would have achieved their essential demands in a parliament of universal suffrage, whilst in Hungary electoral reform, although hotly contested, had become inevitable, and was bound to secure for the nationalities more extensive representation, and therefore a better opportunity for putting forward their demands. But after the war, however it might end, comprehensive extension of rights would in any circumstances have been inevitable, as everybody in the monarchy realised. But for the undermining activities of its enemies, the monarchy would have been fully able to carry out its historical task of settling the relationship between the peoples within its territory. The crude mistakes of the rearrangement of territory, which our former enemies to a great extent already realise themselves, and the extensive unrest, which will not cease until the former has been adjusted, would have been avoided.

As a result of the change in the disposal of forces under the peoples who were living together, a new form of the

nationalities problem had emerged within the monarchy during the latter period since the commencement of the constitutional era. The citizens of the nationalities had gained individual equality, but national equality had not been attained. The influence of their fellow-nationals abroad upon them became more and more marked. Through the formula of resisting any interference in our internal affairs, we were able to insist upon external correctness of behaviour on the part of our neighbours, but the influx of influences cannot be checked, even through the most efficiently guarded frontier.

It all depended which attraction was the stronger ; that of the independent state of fellow-nationals was already more or less present, because it is pleasanter for any people to be even badly governed in its own way and in its own language. Since the national consciousness of all the people had been strongly developed, this could not be counterbalanced by mere equality of citizenship, or even by intensive economic progress, but only by a genuine equality of national status embracing all sides of civil life. Without this, the foreign-speaking citizens would be dissatisfied. They were and would remain a passive element in the resistance of the ambitions of their fellow-nationals abroad.

Was there ever a time when it was possible absolutely to satisfy the nationalities in Austria-Hungary, without wrenching asunder the fabric of the state ? This question was but seldom answered in the affirmative in the monarchy. The heat with which certain demands were urged certainly spread abroad the impression that much would have to happen before the tension would really be relieved at all.

It can of course never be proved that it would have been possible, through a timely and adequate extension of the rights of nationalities, to deprive the centrifugal

tendencies in the monarchy of their *raison d'être*. The opponents of any adequate extension of privileges would emphasise that nationalities, if firmly governed, may strive to separate, but that experience teaches that an extension of self-government merely makes it easier for them to obtain the means of realising their ambitions.

I believe that this is a fallacy ; for if extension of privileges failed to bind the nationalities more closely to their ancient allegiance, this proved that they were only retained by physical force. But since one was not alone in the world such force was subject to all the vicissitudes of political development.

Opposed to the more concealed as well as to the more openly expressed desires of the nationalities, was the dominating fact in Austria and Hungary, rooted in the ancient structure of the monarchy and in the division created by the dualism, that in spite of any formal equality, a certain predominance of the German or of the Hungarian element prevailed. This resulted in a growing disparity between those sections which had settled into their historical position and the new forces which were striving to arrive at the same position, from which only impartial insight could find a way out.

Before the war nobody could foresee that a world catastrophe would bring to an end any Austro-Hungarian policy. Nobody could reproach her leading statesmen for refusing easily to give up the true foundations of their country, or the representatives of the nationalities, who wished to secure for their fellow-citizens who had achieved a higher development in the ancient union, a greater share in the affairs corresponding to their increased importance.

But in the meantime the moment had come when the rapid development of the Balkan problems had caused them to be not merely the concern of our foreign policy,

as they deeply and intimately affected the internal relations within the monarchy.

The state of affairs produced by the Treaty of Berlin brought the Balkan countries next to our frontiers, Rumania, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Bosnia, into the foreground of the political arena.

We need not here further deal with the policy followed with regard to Rumania. Correct relations, neighbourliness, and later even an alliance, were to protect us from interference with the conditions of the Rumanians within the monarchy. These remained, generally speaking, unchanged, excepting for certain attempts at palliative measures, the last of which were Tisza's in 1915 and 1916.

Our task in Bulgaria was of a more negative kind, but of outstanding importance. The principality had been created as an outpost of Russia on the Balkan Peninsula, not only as being on the road to Constantinople, but also as being on the flank of all the Balkan states. It was necessary to change this state of affairs if we were to adopt the interest of the Balkans at all. To stand up against the abused "nimbus" of the liberator Power was possible only with the strong support of Bulgaria's sense of independence. That however proved effective, and our diplomacy, which for many years it fell to me to represent at Sofia, successfully attacked Russia's position of advantage and forced her on to the same level as the other signatory states.

There were one or two reactions under obvious Russian influences, but they did not succeed in handing over the control of the policy of the country to Russia again, and were speedily overcome, especially as they failed to bring Bulgaria the advantages for which she had hoped. Bulgaria had emancipated herself from the rôle of being an instrument of Russia, but later on the last Russophile minister, Daneff, succumbed to the illusion of a Balkan

alliance. Bitter disappointment resulted for Bulgaria, who had already for many years been supplanted by Serbia as the lever for Russia's policy in the Balkans. Serbia was also selected for the task of preventing the Southern Slav territory of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy from settling down.

CHAPTER XVI

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

THE realisation of the fact that the problems of the Southern Slavs must be solved in connection with the Habsburg empire, unless they were to loom up larger and larger in proportion as Turkey grew more and more impotent, a realisation which almost instinctively determined the policy of Prince Eugène of Savoy, was slow in finding a place in the highly conservative range of ideas of Austria's statesmen, and later of Austria-Hungary's. In this connection the creation of the military boundary was typical—to cut oneself off from anything that happened beyond one's frontier posts, whilst remaining confident that everything at home would go on as usual in the same old framework.

When Andrassy accepted the mandate for occupying Bosnia-Herzegovina at the Congress of Berlin, he had the public opinion of practically the whole monarchy against him. This event first opened Austria-Hungary's eyes to the state of affairs which the development of conditions in the Balkans had reached at our immediate frontiers. Even then we were faced with the competition of Serbia, who regarded those provinces as naturally belonging to her sphere of national interest. We were forced to take Bosnia-Herzegovina, which Turkey could no longer hold, lest through a combination hostile to ourselves we should have, as it were, a powerful wedge forced deep between Dalmatia and Croatia, undermining the cohesion of our ancient Southern Slav territories. The occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina was an essential step in the urgent matter of defining the general lines of Austria-Hungary's attitude to the Southern Slav problem ; but it was no solution of the problem at all. It created immediate duties, without the fulfilment of which neither time nor opportunity could be gained for setting our own house in order in the Southern Slav countries.

It was not only necessary to establish peace, order, and security in Bosnia-Herzegovina, but we had to undertake a civilising work such as would show that the monarchy knew how to combine progress with the maintenance and development of the national peculiarities of the people. It was neither necessary nor possible to follow a definite line of policy, as long as there was no clear idea as to the manner in which these conditions were to be fitted into their place between territories of similar nationality, and as long as the country was still in the stage when the most urgent preliminary arrangements had to be set going, and the administrative and economic machine had to be reconstructed. But soon we felt the necessity for undertaking the political part of our task, and therefore the possession of Bosnia-Herzegovina was a pressing occasion for Austria-Hungary to take stock of the whole range of the Southern Slav problem, and to arrive at a carefully weighed decision about it.

The civilising work of Austria-Hungary in Bosnia-Herzegovina was an achievement which does her honour, and which did not fall to pieces on the general collapse, but introduced the country into its new relationship in the Southern Slav state at a respectable stage of development.

The first years of the occupation were devoted to the opening up of the country and to the establishment of ordered material conditions and of religious peace. Then followed the creation of a reliable administrative machinery, of a road and railway system, of ordered finances, of appropriate public education, the regulation of the complicated system of landownership on the basis of the existing legal conditions, the drawing up of a land register (*Kataster*), the commencement of the rational exploitation of the rich natural resources of the country through the setting up of modern industrial works.

This constructive work, which did not affect the political problem of the future, was successfully directed by the Minister von Kállay for more than twenty years with determination, with a deep knowledge of the soul of the Southern Slav people, and with selfless enthusiasm for the task. When, after his death in 1903, I was entrusted with the supreme direction of the Bosnia-Herzegovina administration, the time had already come to guide the destinies of this hopeful and blossoming country upon the path of organic progress, and to prepare it at the suitable moment, when political conditions should permit, to take its proper place as a full and equal member in the group of Southern Slavs, the place that would best accord with the welfare and the wishes of Bosnia-Herzegovina as well as with the interest of the monarchy.

It was clear from the first that Bosnia-Herzegovina would not return to Turkish dominion, but it was also obvious that it could not remain in its provisional status when the stage of development reached by the country through our work of civilisation would give it a just claim to share in the full rights of citizenship. This then was the moment when Austro-Hungarian policy had to make up its mind to a definite solution of the constitutional question. But this could not be done without at the same time settling the relationship of Bosnia-Herzegovina to both states of the monarchy, and to the surrounding Southern Slav territories. The Bosnia-Herzegovina problem compelled the monarchy at the proper moment to take into account all the consequences of the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, in a word, to find a timely solution for the whole range of problems, apart from the already existing Southern Slav states within the confines of the monarchy.

I realised that the creation of all the essential conditions of civilisation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, in such a

way as not to embarrass the other departments regarding the decisions which fell within their province, was the task that I had to carry out in a series of practical reforms.

Eight and a half years of work resulted in the statutes of autonomy for the Orthodox and the Mohammedans, which were to reassure those professing these faiths, as to the interests of their religion ; the commutation of the old tithes, which had to prepare the way for the transition to a modern land tax ; and finally, the gradual provisional liberation of the serfs (Kmeten), which was to be the preceding step to the liberation of the whole peasant population from their ancient relationship of hereditary tenants to the great Turkish landowners. Connected with these was the organisation of the communes, the creation of representative bodies of the districts, and a systematic development of the educational system.

In addition, measures were taken to open the road to higher official positions to the natives of the country, many of whom had already secured academic training and were employed in considerable numbers in the lower ranks of the service.

I have selected these measures for special mention because they helped more than any other to raise Bosnia-Herzegovina from the level of a Turkish province to that of a European country which now began to concern itself more keenly as to its future fate. The provisional settlement under which the monarchy was quite happy to carry on, being perhaps not ready to take any definite decision, did not satisfy the people, who had been raised by our administration and were beginning to feel themselves more and more powerful.

The Austro-Hungarian administration had won respect in the country through its achievements, although the native population still regarded it as a foreign rule

because they had no share in it. But nobody in the country could explain how it was that after thirty years of actual rule no permanent form of government had been established. To drag out a transition régime whose *raison d'être* consisted in setting up the necessary preliminary machinery, could not but be regarded as indicating an absence of definite intentions, or an inability to arrive at a decision which was recognised as urgent. In the end the native population were inevitably confused as to the intentions of the monarchy. Thereby the door was opened wide to other endeavours, diametrically opposed to the interests of the monarchy.

Whatever one may consider to have been Austria-Hungary's duty in the Southern Slav question, one thing is certain : the monarchy could not pause in the cultural development of Bosnia-Herzegovina at a definite point which might appear to her to be suitable ; she had to introduce the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina to full European citizenship with all the political consequences which this involved, or else renounce her mandate of occupation. Since this could not be entertained by any possible quarter in Austria-Hungary, if only on account of the other Southern Slavs in the monarchy, it necessarily followed, as indeed the native population had fully expected, though they may not have desired it, that Austria-Hungary's title of possession to Bosnia-Herzegovina should assume a definite character, without regard to the fact that it was unfortunately not yet possible to induce the two states of the monarchy to come to a definite decision as to the exact manner in which the new countries were to be incorporated in the mosaic of the monarchy.

But one step could be taken immediately ; and that was to extend to Bosnia-Herzegovina the sovereignty of the ruler who for thirty years had exercised full powers of government over this desolated province and

had raised it to prosperity ; and to bind up their destinies in a durable way with those of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and the other peoples living under the Habsburg sceptre.

It is clear that the natural development of affairs forced the monarchy to fulfil its tasks and to gather together the individual peoples of the Southern Slavs.

Was it still capable of doing so ? Was it not thereby advancing the aims of others ? No one could know what the future had in store. But to fail to carry out her destiny as long as Austria-Hungary was capable of action, would be to abdicate and to hand over to others the settlement of her problems, which were urgently crying for solution.

On the 4th April 1908, I handed the Emperor Francis Joseph a memorandum in which I set out the urgent reasons calling for a stabilisation of the relations between Bosnia-Herzegovina and the monarchy, and drew the conclusion that the necessary legislative and diplomatic steps should immediately be taken in order to convert the occupation which had existed for thirty years, and had bound Bosnia-Herzegovina with a thousand threads to Austria-Hungary, excluding the possibility of any return of those countries to Turkish dominion, into a permanent and constitutional Union with the state—a change which could surprise nobody in the occupied territory, but would be accepted as a matter of course.

My proposal was received with full understanding on the part of the monarch, and he concurred in principle, but the Minister of Foreign Affairs, to whom I sent it at the same time, at first opposed it. Baron Aehrenthal drew attention to the international questions arising out of the matter and did not see how it could be carried through diplomatically. He proposed to draft a counter-memorandum.

I naturally recognised the necessity of securing the

agreement of the signatory Powers to the Treaty of Berlin, subject to the proviso that it would be impossible to secure this in advance, and that it could only be obtained retrospectively. We had no choice in the matter. Developments in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the unrest which was manifesting itself in Turkey made it necessary to take a decision either in a positive or in a negative direction.

Aehrenthal's counter-memorandum was never put in and nothing further was heard of the matter for the time being ; but it could not disappear from the agenda.

Through the outbreak of the Turkish revolution on the 25th July 1908, the state of affairs in the Balkans was revealed as in a flash of lightning, right up to our frontiers. On receiving information of the occurrences at Salonica and Constantinople I hastened back from England, where I was staying with friends, and found a pressing invitation from Aehrenthal to meet him at Semmering, where he was spending the summer. Our discussion took place on the 5th August, and revealed the most complete agreement in our views as to what the situation required. He had dropped all his objections to my proposal of April.

The breath of reality had dispersed them like mist. Parliamentary elections were pending in Turkey. Aehrenthal recognised that we could never expose ourselves to the situation of having writs issued for Bosnia-Herzegovina as still being nominally a Turkish province, whether they were to be complied with or not. It was as impossible for us that members for Bosnia-Herzegovina should go to Constantinople, as that constitutional rights should be withheld from the inhabitants of Bosnia-Herzegovina which were accorded to the whole of Turkey. Bosnia-Herzegovina must therefore be incorporated in the monarchy and provided with popular representation.

From that day dated the close co-operation between

Aehrenthal and myself to complete the work which was destined finally to secure Bosnia-Herzegovina from any association with Turkey, and from the danger of falling a sacrifice to Serbian schemes of conquest.

On the 19th August the question of annexation was considered in the Joint Council of Ministers, and an agreement in principle was arrived at which incidentally clearly revealed the limits beyond which the contemplated move could not go. The Hungarian Prime Minister, Dr. Wekerle, concurred in the annexation, subject to two conditions, that the dualism should not be endangered, and that the annexation should be associated with the historic claim of St. Stephen's Crown. The Austrian Prime Minister, Freiherr von Beck, called attention to the internal difficulties and to the diplomatic consequences that would result, but recognising the validity of the arguments in its favour, did not oppose it, though still reserving the final decision of the Austro-Hungarian government.

One fact was already apparent on that day: the constitutional questions arising out of the incorporation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in the monarchy could not be decided yet. It was therefore necessary to limit oneself to extending the sovereignty of the ruler to the occupied provinces, and to postpone the settlement of their constitutional position to a later period.

It is true that this was a halting solution. One provisional régime had merely taken the place of another. But it was a great step forward, and it showed that the monarchy was determined not to part with the responsibility for the fate of those territories. Further steps would have to be considered with quiet deliberation in connection with the larger problems arising out of the Southern Slav matters; but it would have to be borne in mind that with the extension of the sovereignty the Bosnia-Herzegovinian question had not ceased to be

actual. We had a certain amount of time in hand which we could fill up by inaugurating what was now to be an "Imperial territory" (Reichsland).

Baron Aehrenthal had to make the diplomatic preparations for the Act of Annexation. To me fell the task of examining the ground in Bosnia-Herzegovina again and taking the necessary preparatory measures.

For this purpose I spent September 1908 in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and ascertained that almost the whole population was unanimous in its desire and in its expectation to emerge from the thirty years of uncertainty, and to get its constitutional position and the status of its inhabitants cleared up. But it was obvious to me that the annexation could not be carried through without at the same time granting some proper form of representation and a considerable measure of political rights.

With regard to the attitude of the individual groups of the population, the masses in Bosnia-Herzegovina awaited the event as a matter of course. The Serbian Citizens' Party would not welcome the change, but was generally ready to accept the *fait accompli*. The main Serbian organisation, under the leadership of Jevtanovic, was principally concerned in obtaining extensive autonomy. In general the Serbian leaders wished to see how things would develop.

Amongst the Mohammedans, friendly feelings towards the monarchy were very general, though they had a strong religious bent for Constantinople. Politically, however, the Old Turks, who constituted the larger number of the very conservative Bosnian-Herzegovinian Mohammedans, felt a considerable dislike for the new order which had been inaugurated on the Golden Horn, whereas those of the Mohammedan intelligentsia who were in sympathy with the Young Turks, were stimulated by the events in Turkey. On one point all the Mohammedans were in agreement: they dreaded the very idea of union

with a Balkan state. The Catholics to a man were in favour of union with Austria-Hungary; some of them wished to be attached to Croatia, and some of them wished Bosnia-Herzegovina to have her own autonomy.

General feeling on the eve of annexation, according to the most reliable judgments, was that the greater portion of the population was prepared to accept this clearing up of the state, although not with complete satisfaction, since so much was left in uncertainty. Even with regard to the Serbs the opinion of those best qualified to judge was that almost all the Serbs would be content with the annexation, although none of them would have the courage to incur lasting opprobrium by proclaiming their satisfaction.

It was possible and necessary for us to act. Everything depended upon whether Austria-Hungary was able and willing to carry through the change upon which she had embarked, to the complete organic incorporation of the new countries. It could not be done without a revision of the whole structure of the Adriatic provinces of the empire, which were suffering from other archaic provisional arrangements also.

The annexation was effected on the 7th October 1908 by a proclamation of the sovereign. It set great waves in motion in Europe, roused Serbia to fury, and had a long and difficult diplomatic sequel.

In Bosnia-Herzegovina everything went off quite quietly, although at my urgent request no special military measures were taken, in order plainly to put on record the complete quietness with which the population accepted the event, and although the public departments functioned just as on an ordinary day, there were no counter-manifestations at all. The general feeling was that everything was remaining as it had been, but that the condition with which everybody had grown up was now

definitely established. On the other hand, public attention was directed to those concessions in the proclamation of annexation which promised the population an effective share in the administration, through their elected representatives.

After incorporation, Bosnia-Herzegovina remained under the joint and equal control, and subject to the supreme decision, of the two governments. The new fundamental laws to be introduced had therefore to be worked out laboriously, point by point, in agreement between the Austrian and Hungarian governments. They did not in all matters confer the measure of self-government which I had proposed in my drafts, but they contained the maximum which the two governments felt they could accept as unobjectionable to the monarchy and not calculated to prejudice the later settlement of Bosnia-Herzegovina's constitutional position in the state.

The new statutes of the province, and the other constitutional laws, were sanctioned on the 17th February 1910, and promulgated on the 20th February. The reception by Bosnia-Herzegovina was friendly, for each section of the laws conferred an extension of rights on the country. Criticism was directed not to what was offered but to what was omitted from the acts.

The election of the Diet went off in complete peace and order during the latter part of May, and the newly elected representatives met in the middle of June, after the Emperor Francis Joseph had, on the occasion of his visit to Bosnia-Herzegovina in the early days of June 1910, been accorded a most brilliant welcome, with every manifestation of sympathy and affection on the part of the whole population—the demonstration including all religious denominations. The Diet set about its task in an energetic and businesslike way, but did not fail to put on record its reservations regarding the “gaps in the constitution.”

The ground had now been cleared for further work in Bosnia-Herzegovina. But we should have to be careful to avoid mistakes and omissions, lest the words spoken by the Serbian minister Pašić, in his keen irritation at the success of the annexation, should come true: "Serbia does not want a conference, for there she could get nothing; she does not want a war, because nobody will help her. Bosnia-Herzegovina will remain an open wound."

It was the task of Austro-Hungarian policy to prevent this prophecy from being fulfilled. In this it unhappily failed. The inabilities of the governments of Austria and Hungary to create the conditions of an effective incorporation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which would not hinder the development of the monarchy but would complete it, the jealousy of the two states lest the addition of the new province should be of greater benefit to one than to the other, Austria's disinclination to recognise the historical claim advanced by Hungary, although it was in accord with the economic, geographical, and ethnographical conditions in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Hungary's fears lest even if a solution were arrived at on the lines she desired it would affect her in her relations with Croatia-Slavonia (for while Hungary considered the Settlement of 1867 as final, this was far from being the feeling in Croatia), the resulting tendency of both governments to postpone from year to year any constitutional decisions regarding Bosnia-Herzegovina—all these considerations led to Pašić's prophecy being fulfilled, and Bosnia-Herzegovina remained an open wound.

The problem of Bosnia-Herzegovina set all the other Southern Slav territories round about in a ferment. It brought to fruition desires which could only be prevented from placing a dangerous strain upon the structure of the state if speedily dealt with within the

elastic framework of the Habsburg Empire. Bosnia-Herzegovina was in fact an essential portion of the monarchy's work of consolidation at home. The continued existence of the monarchy was risked in order to maintain all the historically out-grown divisions and associations, even when they could no longer be adapted to the actual conditions. It was certainly impossible to foresee the catastrophic collapse, but there were sufficient warnings of the storm to prevent Austrian and Hungarian statesmen from continuing to lull themselves into a sense of security, and to induce them to seek, through the necessary organic reforms, to restore the equilibrium between the component parts of the two states, which had been upset through the progressive development of the several individual races.

The joint government, having no direct influence upon internal affairs, could only give information and warning, although national difficulties at home reacted more and more extensively upon current questions of foreign policy.

I remained in charge of the administration of Bosnia-Herzegovina until the 17th February 1912. I endeavoured to strengthen the confidence of the people in the new conditions, and to give both governments accurate information as to the development of affairs there, which affected the monarchy far more closely.

In the Provincial Chamber of Sarajevo, the new parliament suffered from the usual childish ailments, but showed a keen desire for work and considerable interest and understanding of economic matters. The Diet was most keenly interested in the question of the liberation of the Kmetes, in which a temporary solution was arrived at in 1911 of a kind calculated to conduce to a final settlement of the question of peasant proprietorship, with due regard for all interests concerned. This voluntary Kmeten solution, by granting land credits,

was continued with great success until the outbreak of war.

The Diet attempted to shake the barriers within which their sphere of action was confined. It did not merely strive to exceed the powers allotted to it, but although limited by law to the rôle of a provincial representative body, it claimed the status of a parliament. This attitude, which I should add was only tentatively taken up in my time, was a clear indication to me that the questions of a final political settlement of Bosnia-Herzegovina could not be pigeon-holed.

After my departure the pretensions of the Diet increased unceasingly, and they began more and more to come under the influence of Belgrade, which during the Balkan wars and after the Treaty of Bukarest had scarcely restrained themselves at all. The activities of the "Narodna Odbrana" began, the ominous precursor of the catastrophe of 1914.

When, on the 8th February 1917, I returned to Serajevo, after an absence of nearly six years, to take up again the duties of an administrator, I found the city clearly reflecting the hard times through which Bosnia-Herzegovina had passed. Political life had been interrupted by the events of the war which had originated there. The constitution of 1910 had been suspended, and the Diet dissolved. The country had become a theatre of war, and enemy detachments had reached the capital. Trade and communications were interrupted. The country had been almost entirely denuded through military requisitions and through the extensive sales of goods. The inhabitants, especially the peasants, had a great deal of money, but as the result of three bad harvests they had no provisions and no food for their cattle. In many districts there was destitution, which could only be very slightly mitigated by supplies from the monarchy,

which was itself suffering acutely from the lack of them. The streets were without traffic. The whole of the active male population was with the colours, fighting on all fronts with exemplary courage. Of this the country was not a little proud ; but the self-confidence of the population had increased to a corresponding degree. It was quiet and patient, and loyally carried out all the regulations of an administration which in the war too functioned admirably. The Bosnians and the Herzegovinians had testified in blood to their determination to protect their country within the framework of the united strength of Austria-Hungary. But they definitely expected not to be a subject country after the war, but to be able to develop a free national life and to live their lives as citizens with fully equal rights, in a commonwealth which was not to be forced upon them without their consent.

Nobody expected the constitutional relationship to be settled before the end of the war. It was realised that this question could be solved only in connection with other changes about to occur in Austria-Hungary, with which it was inextricably bound up, and that each side would have to reckon with various possibilities and sentiments, according as the war might end.

One thing was clear to me. The moment had come for Austria-Hungary seriously to consider her decision regarding Bosnia-Herzegovina, and also regarding her other Southern Slav provinces.

After the terrors of the enemy invasion had been overcome, the first political wishes that manifested themselves in Bosnia-Herzegovina were that the Diet should be summoned. I noticed this on the occasion of my first visit, and it was a feature for a long time. Whilst I saw no objection to the reappearance of the Diet, there was an essential difficulty in the matter : there was no Diet. The one which had been elected in 1910 had

been dissolved shortly before its term was up. For various reasons in the opinion of those competent to judge, principally on account of the absence of the majority of the electors at the front, a new election was out of the question.

Those politicians in Bosnia who called loudest for the summoning of the Diet proposed, in order to make it easy for themselves and the government, that the dissolution should be revoked and that the old Diet should be summoned. That would have been a farce, and it would have amounted simply to the nomination of deputies whose mandate, apart from the dissolution, had expired for some time.

The most urgent matter was not the Diet, but to resume one's efforts for the economic development of the country, which had been entirely interrupted by the war.

I set in motion again the voluntary liberation of the Kmetes, in order that those who were in a position to free themselves should not be forced to wait until compulsory liberation had become law, a step for which I thought that the time had come, and which required considerable preparatory work. I had this measure introduced. I took the same step with regard to the separation of the communal woods and meadows from those owned by the state, a very radical measure, but one that was called for by the exceptional conditions, and the ancient theory of law of the country ; for years it had been on the programme of the Bosnia-Herzegovinian administration, and constituted an essential factor in the final settlement of the conditions of land tenure. At its final session on the 20th June 1914, the Bosnia-Herzegovinian Diet had accepted a government bill dealing with the separation of the communal woods and forests, which, however, did not receive formal sanction.

The valuable resources of the country in wood, iron, coal, and salt had for some considerable time been developed by a few modern works, and had been available for use. The war had not interrupted these industries, but had actually stimulated them considerably. They served many important requirements of the forces. But as the population was now instructed, and had given up the obsolete primitive methods of exploitation, the time was ripe for securing sufficient capital to institute works on a larger scale, which would not only supply abundant employment and considerable profits for the country, but the products of which, in view of the enormously increasing demand, would be most welcome to the monarchy and to foreign countries. The latter portion of my period of office in Bosnia-Herzegovina was occupied in detailed studies of economic plans in this connection.

The administration was whole-heartedly engaged in promoting the welfare of the population and the development of the resources of Bosnia-Herzegovina, until the moment when the sudden turn of events deprived it of the further charge of the destinies of the country.

Thus Austria-Hungary's Near Eastern policy came to an end at the crucial moment of our weakness at home and abroad. It was symbolic that it should have ended with the last breath of the old Danubian empire, which was unthinkable without its Near Eastern policy.

Austria-Hungary had been the instrument for maintaining the essential relations between the Upper and the Lower Danube basin; it had been the link uniting the culture of the Eastern and the Western world. It was this rôle that had maintained the state in the Middle Danube throughout the centuries, in the various forms it assumed during its history as German-Roman Empire,

as the Kingdom of Hungary, as Austria, and as Austria-Hungary.

The Near Eastern policy of Metternich's Austria was already condemned to a certain sterility. It exhausted itself in attempts to maintain, as far as possible, the *status quo* in the Balkans, against the force of rising peoples. It is true that this period of dualism saw the final introduction of constitutional equality in national questions, but this was subject to the maintenance, as far as possible, of the special position of the Germanic element in Austria, and in Hungary it was based upon the supremacy of the historical nation. This condition was deeply rooted in the national development of these states, but it lessened Austria-Hungary's attraction for the Balkan countries. There was, besides, the opposition in the economic interests of the two states of the monarchy in the Balkans. Austria wanted to find new markets for her industry, while Hungary wanted to protect herself effectively against competition from the agricultural productions of the Balkan countries. This conflict of interests was a very great difficulty to us in our endeavours to co-operate unanimously in those countries where we could establish good relations only by extensive economic concession in the matter of imports and exports, without sacrificing the one for the other.

The almost tragic feature of our Balkan policy consisted in the fact that while the task which Austria-Hungary had to carry out in the Balkans—the impartial encouragement of progress in all the Balkan states—was more and more clearly recognised in principle, concern for the centrifugal tendencies of certain groups of the population in the monarchy itself on the one hand, and the conflict between the economic point of view of Austria and Hungary on the other hand, often confused our ideas and crippled us in action.

The necessary power of combination to inaugurate

such a quality as would have brought all the elements in the Balkans into free, or at any rate correct, relations with the monarchy, was not always wanting, but it was very difficult to unite all the factors competent to speak on one line of policy in regard to any action that had to be taken. This often resulted in omissions, or, what is quite as bad, in delays until it was too late.

Perhaps the time would still have come for us to restore the internal equilibrium which had been upset by the growing strength of the nationalities, a fact which would also have helped us to adjust our relations with the East. But the collapse came and the leaders in Austria-Hungary were removed from the possibility of any further action.

Yet natural conditions in the Danube basin remain unchanged, and this territory, upon which not the arbitrary works of chance, but the constant requirements of the peoples settled upon it, had created a unity of power, will again have to solve the problem of a great highway on the south-east. The former Austro-Hungarian monarchy is now "Balkanised"—that is to say, through the unconsidered action of the Entente, incomplete states have been created, the sections of which pass straight through the living organs of the individual peoples. The Succession States still feel the influences keeping them apart more keenly than those tending to unite them. And yet all their sufferings and difficulties result from the rent that has been made in their old connection, which was to bring them nothing but freedom and independence; but in point of fact has resulted in want, bitterness, and the desire for revenge, and has introduced a new set of serious problems.

At the same time, daily need exerts a power influential in re-knitting the thread which will restore the essential circle of economic life between areas of production which depend upon one another. We need not concern our-

selves with the actual names and form through which this will be achieved. In the end it will be the hedgehog system, regarding which Lichtenberg, drawing a moral for humanity, states that during the winter months these creatures lie as close to one another as is necessary to protect them from the cold, but keep enough distance to avoid hurting each other with their prickles.

The Succession States will also, either jointly or separately, pursue an economic policy in the Near East. The peoples of the Danube group and of the Balkan group will find their points of contact, and re-establish relationships accordingly.

The ancient cultural heritage of the former Austro-Hungarian monarchy will not be lost, and will, in the course of time, pass to the Balkan States too. In so far as much labour has caused it to take root in the soil of Bosnia-Herzegovina, that country is assured of a pre-eminent position in the state with which it has been incorporated.

CHAPTER XVII

MY SECOND TERM OF OFFICE AS MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

ON the 14th April 1918, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Count Czernin, had sent in his resignation after a joint ministerial conference at Baden, in circumstances which have already partially become public knowledge through various revelations, but which had no connection with the crisis at the Foreign Office. On the evening of the 15th April, I was summoned by telephone to Budapest, whither the Emperor had repaired the day before in connection with the negotiations for a compromise on the suffrage question. I had received no indication as to the reason for my summons, and imagined that the monarch wished to discuss with me the question of the Hungarian suffrage, and possibly the candidates for the office vacated by Czernin. On the 16th the Emperor drove in a car with some gentlemen of his suite to Alcsuth, to visit the Archduchess Clothilde, and invited me to come too. On the way back he took me in his car and immediately began to speak of the importance of filling the vacant post of Minister for Foreign Affairs as quickly as possible. All the persons who in the circumstances could be considered for the appointment, were carefully discussed. The pros and cons were examined in each case. I did not get the impression that he had anybody definite in view yet. Then, still obviously under the influence of the excitements of the last few days, he gazed steadfastly without a word at the surrounding country in its spring-time freshness. Suddenly he turned to me and asked me whether I would not be willing to take charge of the Foreign Office again. I expressed the great surprise which I genuinely felt, recalled the situation of the 21st December 1916 and the grounds which had led to my resignation, enumerated all the objections which might be brought forward against my return to the Foreign Office, and begged the monarch to consider the matter further,

and in any case only to regard me as one of his candidates.

The Emperor said no more about it, but when we arrived at the castle of Ofen he immediately commanded me to an audience, and with a gracious assurance of his unchanged confidence he informed me of his decision to entrust me again with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

I expressed my readiness to obey the call of the Emperor, on the understanding that I should return to office with the same views as I had left it, and that one and a half years of rule would have shown the Emperor how essential a consistent and independent foreign policy was, especially in such tempestuous times. If he would extend to me his unlimited confidence, be entirely open with me, and make it possible for me to take full responsibility for his actions as a ruler, as well as for my own actions in office, I would venture to continue to attempt the work of the political salvation of the monarchy. I pointed out that the situation was entirely different from what it was when I left office. The growing exhaustion of the Central Powers, and the result of the U-boat war, had had their effect upon the general conditions. I had left office in the course of peace negotiations, and I should take office again with the intention of endeavouring to bring about an honourable moderate peace, in which object I knew I was entirely at one with the aims which the monarch had consistently maintained. A clear and constant desire to reach an understanding unaffected by the favourable or unfavourable fortunes of war, would be bound to lead to a way out of the terrors of the endless and unnecessary miseries of the struggle.

The Emperor indicated his agreement with my remarks, in the course of which he had also made various comments on recent events, and confirmed my appointment.

The serious and determined pacific intentions with which I took office were certainly called for by our

general position, but it was the most difficult conceivable moment for endeavouring to secure peace.

The Peace Treaties of Brest-Litovsk with the Ukraine and Russia had been concluded. The treaty with Rumania was completed and almost ready for signature. Troops were thus made available for the Central Powers to strengthen their forces in the south-west and in the west. The Germans had had considerable initial success in their powerful offensive in Flanders, directed at separating the French and the British armies. We were making preparations for a decisive advance on the Italian front. Not a whisper of peace was to be heard. Grim resolution to force matters to a decision seemed to be the only idea on either side, and to be the emotion directing every step. The "unprincipled U-boat war" had long lost any terror for the Entente. American help had taken tangible form, and the systematic increase up to any possible requirements of the Western Powers was assured. The Central Powers were still uncrippled, but they had drawn upon their final reserves. The Entente and America already had the numerical certainty that they might suffer reverses, but could not be vanquished. On all sides there was the grimmest determination. It was as though the whole world at war were awaiting the judgment of God in the battle, to secure which every effort was being made, and to which they would then submit.

The February decisions of the Council of War at Versailles, the vow at the Sorbonne, Wilson's reply to Czernin from Baltimore, and especially Lloyd George's and Orlando's speeches, and on the other side the confident speeches of the German Emperor, had clearly defined the general atmosphere. The talk was of nothing but war and victory. From the 20th March the German offensive in Flanders had been in full sway, and events had begun to take their fateful course.

There was an extravagant element about German war policy and about German strategy, especially in her relations to Poland, Rumania, and Russia—an element which to me seemed rather ominous. It was questionable whether Germany herself would be equal to such enormous endeavours, and also whether Austria-Hungary, who had so nearly reached the point of exhaustion, could follow her through thick and thin. And just at this time the mutinous incidents in the navy at Castelnovo, and in the military camp at Mostar, had given warning signs of what was going on beneath the surface ; while the shortage of provisions in the army and at home was beginning to cause us extraordinary difficulty, and we were forced to ask Germany, who herself had no supplies to spare, to come to our help with cereals in order that we might have sufficient to feed our troops. In general our obligations to Germany, military, financial, and economic, were so great that our indebtedness necessarily affected our ability to press our policy.

After all, we and Germany had essentially the same aims and interests : to maintain our independence and our possessions intact ; but Germany's greater power and her capacity for expansion were a natural ground for bringing forward more extensive claims after her military successes—claims which it was not for Austria-Hungary to gainsay, and which, if the fortune of war had been maintained, were certainly neither more nor less justified than those which the conquerors advanced at a later date.

But this development of German strategy, in which we were inextricably involved, was fraught with most serious consequences for ourselves.

It is not by way of reproach, but as a mere statement of fact, that I observe that in her sense of power when she believed in the final victory of her arms, Germany tried to pave the way for her future position as a world power, to which she felt that by virtue of the energies

latent within her she had as good a claim as any other people. We saw German military and economic efforts extending over an ever-widening field, almost to the point of losing their unity of direction, which had the inevitable double result that our enemies were merely spurred on, through these manifestations of abounding enterprise, to subdue such an ambitious rival, and that Germany, at moments when she had won great successes, could not be induced to consider a "piece of renunciation" such as was alone conceivable. The Reichstag resolution of the 19th July 1917 constituted the first serious warning by that portion of public opinion which no longer believed in the feasibility of Germany's war aims. This resolution did not succeed in affecting Germany's war policy.

The popular sentiment in Austria-Hungary was different. We really did not desire any territorial gains. This was not due to our superior virtue, but to a readily intelligible appreciation of the situation. I should be far from drawing comparisons between Austria-Hungary's moderation and Germany's desire for expansion. Austria-Hungary wanted to maintain her possessions intact, but she did not wish to add new elements to her agglomeration of peoples, or substantially to alter the existing balance between them through any additions. Centuries of association between these peoples had resulted in a certain equilibrium which was subject to internal modifications, to cultural reaction, and to the development of constitutional rights, but did not call for any extension of its framework.

Our manner of dealing with the Polish problem, and the idea of the so-called Austro-Polish solution, appeared to conflict with this view. The inconsistencies were only apparent. Galicia did not form a part of the ancient hereditary territories of Austria and Hungary. It was a

product of the partition of Poland, and always regarded itself merely as the central point of the revival of Poland. When Poland was freed from Russian domination, the union of Galicia with the new-born country could only be a question of time. If the Polish nation were seeking for support in starting their new independent existence, they would most naturally find it where a considerable portion had maintained national existence unbroken, and had further developed it. Poland could herself be strengthened and could strengthen the monarchy through union with Galicia. This was the reason for the Austro-Polish solution.

It would not aim at annexation but at co-ordinating an independent Polish state within the elastic framework of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. The free concurrence of Poland had always been an essential condition of this idea. After all, it was a sheer impossibility for Austria-Hungary, in view of her composition, to incorporate against their will twelve million Poles, in addition to the eight million of Galicia, who would then undoubtedly have renounced their adherence to the state.

Since the Austro-Hungarian monarchy urgently desired peace, and, apart from her territorial integrity and security, asked for nothing for which she would have continued the war even for a single day, every favourable turn of events in the theatre of war naturally encouraged our peace endeavours, as being calculated to give our wishes greater weight.

Favourable developments in the military situation affected the peace spirits somewhat differently in Austria-Hungary and in Germany. I made it my business, at the beginning of my second period of office, to keep this spirit alive in our country and to keep on encouraging it in Germany.

It was a matter of continuing ceaselessly to look out for opportunities for extricating ourselves from the vicious circle which caused those moments in the course of the war which might have been suitable for peace discussion to be lost, through the military quarters, especially in Germany, setting themselves higher war aims, under the influence of success.

The internal political conditions, as well as the economic conditions of the monarchy in the spring of 1918, were bound to strengthen the desire for peace on the part of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who had little power to influence them.

In Austria, Parliament had been summoned under the irresistible pressure of public opinion. A long-pent-up torrent of complaint against the whole management of the war, poured forth from all sides of the House, so bitter and unrestrained that the censorship thought it advisable to forbid the publication of parliamentary reports. All the old differences between the parties were keenly accentuated. The government was without a policy, and was concerned only, through momentary groupings of parties, to get the necessary supplies voted in order to be able to carry on its business.

In Hungary, too, the parliamentary truce was at an end. The suffrage dispute was in full swing ; brought on to the agenda by the opposition to Tisza, it now had to be dealt with by the government of his successor. Wekerle, whom the former opposition had supported, but who could only continue to hold office with the consent of the majority led by Tisza, which was now in opposition, exhausted himself in efforts at a compromise, which, however, neither enabled the government to consolidate its position, nor the suffrage question to reach a solution, though they distracted attention from the serious complications which were arising in all directions on the outskirts of the empire.

Whilst the general internal situation of the monarchy, considered objectively, was sufficiently critical and full of the most thorny problems, it appeared to our enemies, who were carefully observing it, to be even more fraught with danger for Austria-Hungary, and more satisfactory therefore from their point of view ; for it was to a certain extent the result of their endeavours. The population, reduced by the endless suffering and privations of the war to moral and economic exhaustion, could offer little resistance to the systematic efforts of foreign propaganda, which was all the weaker as the internal and external propaganda activities amongst the nationalities were able to develop with surprisingly little interference from the state departments, which generally only attacked them superficially.

The effects of the increased pressure on the fronts, resulting from the arrival of American troops, of the cruel stranglehold of the blockade, and of the war of propaganda conducted from abroad and nourished upon internal discontent, were so demoralising that it was absolutely essential to gather together the constructive resources of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy in a final effort to use its political resources to bring the ship of state, sadly damaged by the storms, into harbour, where the work of thoroughly overhauling her could then be undertaken in peace.

It was with this melancholy outlook that I took office, determined to make every possible use of the time that still remained.

The first task that I had to deal with was to conclude the peace negotiations with Rumania. These had been terminated at Bukarest on the basis of the preliminary peace of Buftea of the 5th March 1918, and the draft treaty was awaiting signature when my predecessor left office.

I arranged with the German plenipotentiary, Secretary

of State von Kuhlmann, to meet me at Bukarest on the 26th April.

During the last days before my departure, I endeavoured to disperse the shadow thrown upon our relations with our allies, as a result of the affair of the Sixtus Letter. There was still considerable excitement about it at the German Headquarters, and the wish was expressed, which I cordially welcomed, that the monarchs should endeavour in a personal conversation to re-establish those confidential relations which at so critical a period could alone ensure harmonious co-operation. General von Crammon, of the German High Command, brought me an invitation from the Emperor William to the German Headquarters at Spa, for the purpose of discussing in principle all the questions effecting our brotherhood-in-arms, so as to do justice to Austria-Hungary and Germany. A consolidation of the alliance, in harmony with the experiences which we had been through, a practical settlement of our joint military organisation, and a commercial understanding corresponding to the interest of both parties, were to be the subjects of discussion. We would then also arrive at a basis for finally achieving a uniform point of view regarding the Polish question, which was still entirely in the air.

It was decided that after the signature of the Treaty of Bukarest the Emperor Charles should go to Spa and that I should accompany him.

On the 27th April I met the German Secretary of State at Bukarest. We found that difficulties had arisen, though these did not affect the agreement with Rumania, but arose out of differences between our other allies. These would first have to be settled, before the treaty could be signed.

The Secretary of State and I endeavoured to clear out of the way, during the journey, one difficulty of which we had already been informed before we left Vienna.

In 1915 Turkey had ceded a strip of territory along the Maritza to Bulgaria, as the price of her alliance, in order that Bulgaria might have a through railway connection with her possessions on the Ægean Sea. Turkey wished to revoke the cession of this territory, on the ground that after her conquests in the war Bulgaria no longer required her alliance. Now, according to the Treaty of Rumania, the whole of the Dobrudscha up to the Danube was to be ceded to the four allies, who intended to yield this territory to Bulgaria. Turkey declared that she would oppose this, unless the territory on the Maritza were restored to her, to which she had all the more claim, since her troops had assisted materially in the conquest of the Dobrudscha. Turkey agreed that the old Bulgarian Dobrudscha should be restored to that country, but she demanded that the rest of the province should be held jointly and should be constituted a con-dominion under the four allied Powers. Kühlmann and I decided provisionally to accept this solution, unsatisfactory though it was, in order not to delay the conclusion of peace, and with a view to arriving at a final settlement later on. We saw that it would not be easy to persuade Bulgaria to accept the compromise. The Bulgarian and Turkish plenipotentiaries were not yet in Bukarest when we arrived. It was even reported that the Bulgarian Prime Minister, Radoslavoff, was annoyed about the Dobrudscha, and was doubtful of coming. Ali Messimy Bey, the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, was on the way.

The firm but moderate command of Field-Marshal von Mackensen, and the wise and accommodating régime of the Margiloman Cabinet, had maintained peace and order in Bukarest. Rumanian sentiment was resigned and restrained. Our most bitter enemies were not in the capital, but in Jassy. The conservatives, who were in control, were seeking a possibility of achieving their

hopes through the old idea of a good understanding with us, even in the unpromising times ahead. But even at this time, when Rumania was humiliated, we had to bear in mind that the differences between political tendencies in Rumania would not affect her national aims, but the methods of achieving them. There were no differences in the national aspirations; they had merely been restrained since the beginning of the war through prudence and foresight. But in critical moments general sentiment asserted itself. Even those who favoured the alliance with the Central Powers did not dare to advocate the alliance in the way we wished. The conservatives certainly opposed Bratianu and his policy as being likely to lead to war, but even they believed that they could maintain neutrality only if they could gain territorial concessions by peaceful means. When Rumania entered the war, there was no internal opposition worth mentioning.

The unsuccessful result of the campaign seemed to have proved that the conservative position was right. Bratianu had to admit an error of judgment, and suffer the consequences. But he did not give up his confidence in the final victory of the Entente, and waited at Jassy for events to take a turn favourable to Rumania.

The conservative government had to act as liquidator. It did so with quiet deliberation, whatever hopes it may have had that the fortunes of war would change again. Should this not occur, Rumania was secured; if it did occur, the peace treaty would lapse.

I found the Prime Minister, Margiloman, perfectly composed, resigned with regard to the past and optimistic with regard to the future. He wished the treaty to be signed as speedily as possible, and expressed the most friendly intention regarding the resumption of friendly relations with the Central Powers. He mentioned that court circles were quite disillusioned, and expressed his

gratitude that Austria-Hungary had not pressed the removal of the dynasty.

Margiloman was most enthusiastic about the position in Bessarabia, which was already occupied by Rumania ; he spoke warmly of the exceptionally favourable conditions in that country, which had been almost entirely untouched by the war. Arion, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, seemed to me rather depressed and pensive. He too expressed his earnest desire to bring Rumanian diplomacy into the paths of reconciliation, and to make good the errors of the past.

Old Peter Carp stood firm as a lonely rock, the most convinced adherent in Rumania of the idea of an alliance, and an ardent support of Germany and German *Kultur*, as opposed to the marked French sympathies of his fellow-countrymen. He alone had had the courage, at the Crown Council of 26th August 1916, to demand that the obligations of the treaty should be fulfilled. He was a determined opponent of the dynasty, whose abdication he loudly demanded as expiation for Rumania's defeat.

We proceeded to the final revision of the text of the treaty. The plenipotentiaries of the four Powers did not all meet until the 2nd May. Several discussions were taken up with elucidating certain questions between the allies which were still in dispute, and especially with seeking to prevent their being an obstacle to the signature of peace. Apart from the administration of the Dobrudscha, there was also a difficulty over settling the future boundaries between Bulgaria and Rumania at Hirsova and Braila, over Rumanian schools in Bulgaria, and over Turkish claims to an indemnity from Rumania. Kühlmann and I succeeded in pouring oil on the troubled waters of debate, especially as between Turkey and Bulgaria, and in finally disposing of some of these questions, and in relegating others to future negotiations. The

peace treaty was signed on the 7th May 1918 in the palace of Cotroceni.

This treaty has disappeared in the course of events, and without any further effort Rumania has been enabled to realise her boldest dreams. Without victory she has achieved complete success, an extravagant gift of fortune.

And yet neither just criticism nor the judgment of history should find fault with the second Treaty of Bukarest. Considered in the light of the time and circumstances in which it was concluded—the only fair method of applying a retrospective judgment—it may well claim to be called moderate and just. The Rumanians themselves have never held any other view, although in some points it wounded their self-esteem. They felt they had got off with nothing worse than a black eye. That it should be condemned by the Entente was only to be expected, though the victorious Powers have lost any right to express such condemnation, since they have shown what they understand by justice, security, reparation, and the right of self-determination.

After returning to Vienna on the 8th May, the Chief of the General Staff, Baron Arz, and I went with the Emperor Charles on the 10th May to Spa, for the meeting with the Emperor William, which was fixed for the 12th.

In view of the critical state of events we could no longer postpone a thorough discussion of the whole position ; we had not only to reach an understanding with Germany concerning our joint action in the future ; it was already necessary to ascertain the extent to which co-operation in the future was desirable. We could not lose sight of the fact that the actual purpose of the alliance was peaceful. It was expressly a defensive alliance, and must also remain so in the future. The necessity to take preventive action had arisen, as the Central Powers sincerely felt, through no fault of theirs ;

and the alliance had fulfilled its function. Now that the last convulsive efforts were being made to bring the gigantic struggle to a conclusion, in which out of loyalty to the alliance and out of due regard for our own interests we wished to meet together, it was necessary to pave the way for a return to peace conditions, and to create the framework for such relations with our ally as seemed best calculated to ensure peace and security in the future under the powerful protection of the alliance, and with the free development of our own legitimate interests.

The fact that everything fell out otherwise does not in the least affect the propriety and the significance of the idea which brought us to Spa. We were carrying out our carefully considered duty, and we could not therefore be expected to reckon with catastrophes which we were seeking the appropriate means to avert, and the ultimate extent of which it was not possible for us or even our opponents to foresee.

Moreover, the enormous convulsion which has taken place in Central Europe has not brushed away the peoples, and has not essentially changed their fundamental needs. Though in different forms at Spa and in the later negotiations, we were concerned only with the interests of peoples, and endeavoured to secure justice for them, often after some argument with our ally. Austria-Hungary's efforts were always directed towards a compromise, as expressing the composite vote of the various needs of the individual parts of the monarchy, from which the national states have since been formed. Germany will have to seek to establish commercial relations with her new neighbours in the East, on very much the same lines as Austria-Hungary would have had to do. The Succession States, on their part, will have the same things to offer Germany and the same demands to make of her as hitherto.

The idea of consolidating the alliance cannot even now in retrospect be regarded as mistaken. It will and should be superseded by something else which comprises it and is on a higher plane: the idea of an extended alliance. I do not mean the "League of Nations" of the Treaty of Versailles, which is a kind of mutual insurance guarantee between the victory states, but Wilson's original idea, which, though abandoned by its author, has not therefore been killed. Even if the League of Nations, that is, the union of all peoples upon an equal basis, shall come to guide the destinies of the world, natural circumstances will always maintain the distinction between adjacent states with closely interwoven interests, whose relations are determined by their geographical position, and such as are remote from one another. But until then, states which are dependent upon one another will group themselves principally by treaties, whether these be called alliances, associations, commercial treaties, or anything else.

First and foremost at Spa we were able to record the re-establishment of the most cordial relations between the two monarchs; they then proceeded to discuss outstanding questions with their political and military advisers.

Complete agreement resulted as to the need for both parties to develop the alliance in the light of the experience gained since its institution and especially under the stress of war, to make it automatically extendable, and to bring out its purely defensive character.

But for defence, protective measures are necessary, especially in a world which has not yet obtained the blessings of universal peace and disarmament, which has since been promised us. The military members at Spa therefore proceeded to consider the simplification and assimilation of our military organisation.

The two countries had always been closely associated

in their commercial activities. In a period of great economic areas these were to be made capable of standing on their own feet, especially in view of the commercial rivalry which our enemies were threatening for the future ; this was not to be done in the extravagant spirit of the Central Europe cry of 1915, but as far as possible through the development of our own resources, the exchange of our products, and the participation of neighbouring commercial areas of a similar kind.

Special attention was given to the question of Poland, which, after many changes and experiments, was further than ever removed from a satisfactory settlement. It was agreed to go into the question thoroughly, in close connection with the other matters of interest mentioned, until a satisfactory arrangement had been made.

Concrete agreements were not arrived at at Spa. The monarchs merely entered into a formal undertaking that they would instruct their governments immediately to enter into negotiation regarding the matters which had been discussed.

There was therefore no actual treaty made at Spa, but merely a *pactum de contrahendo*, in the form of a memorandum signed by both monarchs and their ministers.

The effective fireworks of Naumann's "Central Europe" had also made a considerable impression in Austria-Hungary since we were witnesses of the power of the great commercial areas and suffered from it. Nothing was more natural than that we should consider how, following the example of our political alliance, the economic resources of our union could be co-ordinated and developed for our mutual support. Naumann's proposals, which for some time were so enthusiastically acclaimed in Germany, could obtain a similar reception only in the German-Austrian circles of the monarchy.

Such criticisms of these proposals as developed in Germany got more speedily under way in Austria-Hungary. Moreover, the monarchy itself consisted of two independent economic areas which would have to alter the basis of their relations before entering into closer economic alliance with Germany.

After the flood of the earlier discussions in the press, and between the experts of those sections and associations in the two countries which were most closely concerned, had subsided, the German government first officially approached me in the matter on the 18th November 1915. The ambassador, von Tschirschky, handed me an introductory scheme which embraced all matters affecting the future relations between Austria-Hungary and Germany, as conceived from the German point of view, with an extension of the political alliance, and proposals for the settlement of all economic questions on the basis of an economic alliance based on the abolition of almost all customs duties between the two countries. Such an extensive and radical programme could not be accepted or rejected straight away, but had first of all to be made the subject of detailed considerations. After getting into touch with the other partners concerned, I was able to reply, on the 22nd November, to the German preliminary memorandum, that we agreed in principle to an extension of the alliance and were prepared to enter into negotiations with Germany regarding the settlement of our economic relations on the basis of preferential duties.

This was the basis from which Austria-Hungary never essentially departed. The Customs Alliance, which Germany too soon ceased to advocate, found no support worth mentioning in Austria-Hungary. Our industries, which needed protection, were alarmed at the idea of the complete abolition of customs duties between the two countries. The thirty years' period for the economic

agreement desired by Germany was difficult to reconcile with the legal tradition of ten years as a period for economic agreements between Austria and Hungary, and finally there was no inclination to use economic and even military matters as a political instrument, as Germany appeared to contemplate doing.

All these problems were then for a long time lost sight of in the pressure of events which supervened. But though the governments did not concern themselves with them, commercial circles in the two countries did so all the more. This was all to the good, inasmuch as these questions were much more fully developed on the basis of purely practical consideration than they had been in the discussion at Spa.

It was not until the 8th July 1918 that the negotiations at Salzburg between the Austro-Hungarian and the German delegates had commenced, which constituted the first practical result of the great economic movement which had been started three years before with the slogan of "Central Europe." The negotiations were confined within a framework more acceptable to both parties, the unification of the customs scheme and of all customs manipulations, and the drawing up of a preferential customs tariff with as many free items as possible; there being on the German side a marked tendency gradually to arrive at the abolition of all customs charges, whilst the representatives of the two states of the monarchy could only proceed along the path of the widest possible extension of the free lists admissible in view of the economic conditions of Austria-Hungary as far as they could be foreseen.

The negotiations proceeded satisfactorily and had reached a hopeful stage, when the general break-up occurred. But the idea of economic amalgamation in Central Europe is not dead. It survives as representing an internal need in all the new territories which have

been torn asunder through the political upheaval. It is indeed most actively advocated by our former enemies, who have cut Austria-Hungary in pieces. To this the peace treaties bear witness, in their clumsy attempts to place the Succession States under the obligation of rendering mutual economic assistance. But the advice of all statesmen with insight in the Western Powers is already directed towards the same end. In this connection Keynes's book on *The Economic Consequences of the War* is of interest; he advocates (page 248) the formation of a "Free Trade Union" under the protection of the League of Nations, membership of which should be compulsory for the Succession States of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. Voluntary membership should be open to all other states. The author assumes as a matter of course that Britain would join by way of example.

There were pressing tasks awaiting me on my arrival in Vienna on the 14th May. I had to defer them for the time being, since the departure of the Emperor and the Empress to visit the allied courts at Sofia and Constantinople, which had already been postponed several times, was fixed for the 16th May. Apart from fulfilling an act of courtesy which had been awaited for some time by our southern allies, this act was of special significance in those difficult times.

Turkey had entered the war because one of the great motives of the Rumanian war policy—her desire to reach the Straits—and also the war aims of the other Entente Powers, especially Italy, were directed against the vital interests of the Ottoman Empire. Bulgaria wished to regain what she had lost in the Balkan wars and to achieve her national unity. This was only possible through another war with Serbia. Although both Powers were still much exhausted by the last war,

they recovered their vital strength with extraordinary rapidity, though it is true they were assisted by the Central Powers, and became very effective and valuable partners in our alliance. But after so long a strain their physical and moral resources were coming to an end. Signs of considerable exhaustion became apparent, manifesting themselves in Bulgaria in political movements against the war amongst the troops, and in Turkey in increasing apathy and aversion to fighting in the extensive theatres of war. Only those troops who were fighting in the Mohammedan portion of Transcaucasia, in Azerbaijan, in Daghestan, and in Georgia shewed any enterprise. Here the inspiring motive was Turkish chauvinism, seeking to reduce under Turkish sovereignty as many as possible of those highland peoples which were trying to free themselves from Russia.

It was just as well that we should give our southern allies as much confidence as possible by outward manifestations of friendship for our comrades-in-arms. If the great military efforts which were being prepared in Flanders and on the Italian front should succeed, Turkey and Bulgaria also would be assisted, and we could again consider a joint and honourable conclusion of the struggle in the east and in the west.

Both in Sofia and Constantinople the visit of the young ruler of Austria-Hungary and his consort was awaited with pleasure and satisfaction; they were accorded a truly magnificent reception by the populace in both cities.

The reception of the 17th May at Sofia was exceptionally splendid. The whole population had turned out to welcome the allied monarch in the streets—a fact of some significance in the case of a people as little inclined to be demonstrative as the Bulgars, even taking into account the part played by curiosity and suggestion, in contributing to the success of such festive

occasions. Feelings among the population in the capital were obviously more confident than at the front, whence we already had news of increasing war-weariness.

For me the visit meant a return to the scenes of my long period of service during the regency of Stambuloff and the first years of King Ferdinand's rule ; this was expressed in many touching personal reminiscences. I had not been forgotten at Sofia. Though the 17th and 18th May were made the occasion of many outward demonstrations of satisfaction, there was no mistaking the anxiety and suspense which weighed upon the spirits of political circles. Bulgaria had hoped that the Treaty of Bukarest would immediately give to her the Dobrudscha. She actually got only that portion which she had lost to Rumania in 1913, whilst the territory up to the Danube was allotted to the four Allies, who set up a joint provisional administration under German military leadership. It was not to be handed over to Bulgaria till after the war. That was the first disappointment. Then there was the Turkish demand mentioned above for the return of the Maritza strip, ceded to Bulgaria in 1915, which was to constitute the compensation for the quarter share in the northern Dobrudscha which the peace treaty allotted to the allies.

This question, which vitally affected Bulgarian national sentiment and was vigorously exploited by the opposition to the government, had already been keenly discussed at Bukarest, but was then adjourned at the urgent request of Kühlmann and myself in order not to delay the signature of peace.

I endeavoured to allay the excessive excitement which this question had aroused at Sofia. It arose from the tendencious spreading of the report that the prize of victory might finally be withheld from Bulgaria. Her allies were doing so now ; how much more might they do so later in negotiating peace with the enemy ? The

Dobrukscha had become the cry in the country and at the front. The troops were already declaring that they would not go on fighting unless Bulgaria were granted the Dobrukscha.

Regard for Rumania had led the negotiators at Bukarest not to cede the Dobrukscha directly to Bulgaria ; regard for the claims of the High Command and for the objections raised by Turkey caused the cession to Bulgaria to be postponed indefinitely.

Having returned from Bukarest without the Dobrukscha, the position of the government was critical. I was principally concerned with smoothing over the differences between Bulgaria and Turkey, and I promised the Prime Minister, Radoslavoff, that I would do my utmost at Constantinople to win the Turkish government for a compromise that would be satisfactory to both parties. I advised him to go as far as possible to meet Turkey, since the most important thing after all was to maintain cordial relations between all the allies.

Radoslavoff's cabinet was faced with a serious problem in the growing exhaustion of the country. It would soon have to bring matters to a satisfactory conclusion. This depended in the first instance upon the success of the German and Austro-Hungarian attacks. But Bulgaria, too, was faced with serious problems on her own front. The Salonica army had for a long time been quiet, but it was preparing to resume its operations with energy, more especially through the reorganisation of the Greek troops, which it had just incorporated. While the long period of inaction at the front had done much to undermine the *moral* of the Bulgarian troops, they must now expect to be subjected to powerful attack in the south. It was the express duty of her allies to render Bulgaria as speedy and effective assistance as possible. Opinions varied both at the time and after-

wards whether we, and more particularly the German Army Command, did everything that was possible.

Our visits to Sofia went off happily, and certainly contributed to raising spirits generally. There was no jarring note in the meeting between the two allied monarchs, and we were reminded of our happiest times in our old relationships.

King Ferdinand's refined taste and his pleasure in doing justice to an occasion, made the meeting a splendid one. None of those who took part seemed to guess how close at hand was a dark and pitiless fate.

On the 19th May we arrived at Constantinople on a sunny day, at the time when the incomparable picture of the Turkish capital exercises its greatest charm. Huge, gay throngs had assembled on the long road from the station over the Golden Horn to the Yildiz palace in order to see the solemn arrival of the allied monarch and his young consort—a spectacle such as had never been seen at Constantinople, and would have been impossible before the time of the Young Turks. The Turkish populace, too, which had been accustomed to remain silent during public displays, had learnt how to demonstrate, and did so on this occasion with every mark of affection.

The aged Sultan, Mehmed V, had only just recovered from a serious illness. He was by nature timid and weary as the result of his seclusion when heir to the throne. But he was at the greatest personal pains to carry out his duties as host and to offer the choicest hospitality.

The Sultan brought up the matters at issue by putting questions in Turkish, but made use of his Grand Vizier Talaat Pasha and his minister Nessimy Bey as interpreters, and they then continued the discussion at length. The question of the Thracian strip of territory on the Maritza constituted the principal concern of

the leading persons in Turkey. It was not consistent with Turkish *amour propre* that the loss of this territory, which had been conceded as a sacrifice to secure the alliance of Bulgaria, should hold good when Bulgaria was getting the whole Dobrudscha, which had been conquered largely with Turkish troops. As in Bulgaria, this had become an important question in home politics in Turkey, and closely affected Talaat Pasha's position.

I endeavoured, as I had done at Sofia, to pave the way for an acceptable compromise. I especially recommended the Turkish government in the first instance to have recourse to German mediation, because it was alleged at Constantinople that the most responsible quarters in Germany had led them to believe that the surrender of the Maritza would only be of a temporary nature. Moreover, von Kühlmann had gone straight from Bukarest to Sofia in order to put in a word for meeting Turkish wishes. I advised Talaat Pasha to meet Radoslavoff at Berlin with a view to discussing a compromise. I discussed various possible solutions with the Grand Vizier. The meeting at Berlin, to which I also sent our ambassador at Constantinople, the Marquis Pallavicini, did not take place until August. On that occasion the path of reconciliation was resolutely pursued, and a thoroughly conciliatory attitude prevailed. The rush of subsequent events prevented these discussions from bearing practical fruit.

Transcaucasia constituted the other actual subject of political discussion at Constantinople. After the collapse of the Russian Empire, five independent states had arisen there, which Turkey was seeking to bring under her influence, in fact she was trying to get the Mohammedans under her direct dominion. These efforts were very inconvenient for Germany and Austria because they involved a larger and larger portion of the Turkish forces and drew them away from the common front.

Germany was especially affected, because she had aimed at getting a firm footing in Georgia herself, and at opening out strong connections from there in the direction of Afghanistan and India. These two lines of policy, both too ambitious in view of the general situation, had come into conflict, and Germany was not inclined to allow her path to be crossed by Turkey. Though we certainly feared that Germany might be dissipating resources which could not be replaced over so wide an area, we were at one with her in restraining Turkey as far as possible from doubtful adventures.

I took advantage of the occasion of my conversation with Talaat Pasha, the clever and energetic, but very chauvinistic Grand Vizier, to exercise a moderating influence upon him. I was unable then, or for some time afterwards, to gain any more tangible results, because Talaat was endeavouring to gain compensation for his country in Transcaucasia, for the very considerable Turkish losses in Arabia. It was not until later that I succeeded in limiting Turkish ambition to the territory of Azerbaidshan, whose population is predominantly Turkish.

While I left the Turkish politicians with more friendly feelings towards Bulgaria than I had found them, I was glad to be able to record a similar change with regard to Turkey on the part of the Bulgarian Prime Minister Radoslavoff, whom I was able to speak to again on my return journey.

The Emperor and his consort stopped at King Ferdinand's country place, Vrana, near Sofia, in order to spend a few hours with the royal family. Radoslavoff was also present at this meeting ; and it gave me an opportunity of informing the King and the Prime Minister of my impressions at Constantinople.

On my return to Vienna on the 25th May I found

public opinion in a state of considerable excitement. The Austrian parliament had been adjourned, but the members approached me individually and in groups in order to obtain information regarding the position of foreign affairs. It seemed to be on the tip of every tongue to ask about the delegations, which were the proper quarter for me to make my desired statement. I myself felt it would be more desirable to introduce myself to the body to whom I was responsible, and to seek support for my policy with them, as I had not had any opportunity of doing so during my first period of office. But in view of the difficult situation at home, opinion was still very divided as to the possibility and the desirability of arranging a meeting of these delegations. The position at home was highly critical, parliamentary conditions were obscure, and the government's position was almost untenable.

There was even a difference of opinion on the question whether the mandate of the last delegation to be elected was still valid, and therefore whether the delegation ought to be newly elected or not. But a large body even of those leading parliamentarians who regarded the old delegation as still legally in existence, was not inclined to think it advisable that they should be summoned, as the injudicious association of internal with external questions would endanger the peaceful course of debate on foreign affairs. In any case, it was felt that we should wait until the state of parliamentary conditions had been cleared up, and the House of Representatives had settled down to work.

There being considerable pressure for the summoning of the delegations in Hungary also, Vienna strongly opposed a one-sided meeting of the Hungarian delegation alone.

At the beginning of June, impatience increased in Austria for the meeting of parliament and the delegation.

German members demanded that parliament should be summoned at the end of June "for luck," and if Seidler's cabinet or its successor received a provisional vote of supplies, the delegations could meet at the beginning of July. Czechs, Southern Slavs, and Social Democrats emphatically expressed similar wishes, pointing to the critical state of internal affairs and the general need for peace.

These expressions of opinion certainly gave me valuable indications as to feeling in general, as a guide to my course of action. I made it clear to all the politicians whom I met how keenly I desired that parliament and the delegations should be capable of functioning, though I regretted that I myself was unable to assist in this matter. The delegation problem was shelved for a further indefinite period, and I had to devote myself without delay to the pressing tasks which awaited me.

The Spa settlement called for speedy action. In accordance with the agreement between the two Emperors, I made ready for the negotiations, which were to be opened on the occasion of my preliminary visit to the Chancellor, Count Hertling, at Berlin.

The essential question to be solved was the new form of the alliance between Austria-Hungary and Germany.

Since the simultaneous collapse of the two allied Powers, it may seem doubtful whether it was a well-conceived idea to extend the "antiquated" alliance which had done its duty, but had also deeply involved Austria-Hungary in the general world hatred against Germany, into a new period which would see developments that were quite incalculable, and whether it would not have been better policy to let the Treaty of Alliance expire and to postpone the question of its extension until after the war; whether indeed we should not have been justified by the need of self-preservation to tear ourselves free from Germany in time, when we saw that it was beyond

our strength to carry on the fight to final victory. There was no doubt at the time, as indeed I cannot help feeling even to-day, that we had to let our destiny be fulfilled within the alliance; but the alliance, that had been preserved with such vitality and sometimes been put to severe tests, had to be emphasised with special solemnity at that time, if we were to be assured of the full advantage both now and in the future of the united strength of both countries, and in order that we should be able to face the trying period of reconstruction in peace time, shoulder to shoulder.

Apart from any considerations of loyalty to the alliance, which find their natural limit in the duty of each state to ensure its own preservation, we must once and for all dispose of the idea that a final separation from Germany would have saved Austria-Hungary from the consequences of defeat.

Since America had come into the war, for Austria-Hungary to have thrown Germany over would not have furnished the Entente any consideration worth mentioning to induce them to give up the fruits of a complete victory over her declining forces. Our enemies would not have been influenced by the prospect of dealing only with Germany in the future, since the declining scale of Germany's resources and the unlimited increase of American armies offered the Entente too certain a prospect of final victory, for her to wish to saddle herself with complications such as would arise from failure to carry out obligations undertaken with regard to her allies. And this was the essence of the problem. Of what value would a separate peace have been to Austria-Hungary, if the Pact of London were carried out with all the concessions that it implied, to Italy, Serbia, Rumania, and the Czechs? How could the Entente let Austria-Hungary out of the war, when the rewards of victory for all her enemies round her were to be cut

out of her body ? A separate peace of this kind would mean annihilation for the monarchy quite as much as the final capitulation.

Even if we assume, for the sake of argument, that Austro-Hungarian integrity would have been spared as the price of her leaving the war, does anybody believe that the neighbouring states, disappointed in their claims and hopes, would not jointly and severally have fallen upon the monarchy in order to tear it in pieces ? All our experiences since the end of the war give an eloquent answer to this question.

It was of the utmost importance for the future, that the purely defensive character of the alliance should be maintained and emphasised. It was essential that it should not in the future imply either any threat or unfriendliness to anybody, and that we should not incorporate any condition calculated to encourage or to necessitate the formation of counter-alliances.

Anything that might be realised in the future, of the sublime idea of a universal league of nations, should find in our alliance, not an obstacle, but an adaptable nucleus which could easily be incorporated in any universal combination of states, based upon similar principles.

The new treaty of alliance should not only have regard to the diplomatic relations between the two Powers, but should also be the occasion for adapting to the altered circumstances, in the light of the fresh experience gained, the economic, military, and any other ties between them which were to be knit more closely in the future.

The economic agreements to be made were exclusively to serve the purpose of securing and promoting the common interests of the allies, their object was not to shut them off from the rest of the world. Our commercial alliance was not to show a spirit of hostility to the world.

The terms of the agreement should not limit the accessibility of the members, and the possibility of the alliance being absorbed in any other body.

The military provisions would have aimed at giving effect to the practical lessons of the world war for the army organisation of Austria-Hungary and Germany. In all circumstances the complete independence of the individual ally in the organisation of their defensive forces would have been preserved.

Such a relationship, in which the armies of Austria-Hungary and of Germany would have been brought closer together in their organisation, would not have added to the difficulty of any scheme for general disarmament in future. This had to be borne in mind. If the result of the world war had been to improve the prospects for a proportional reduction of the army in all states, such a result would have found no more cordial welcome anywhere than in our group. I put it out of the question to negotiate in any other spirit, but the first thing was to provide for the requirements of the present.

My draft treaty, which was to serve as the basis of negotiations for myself, and which won the concurrence of the monarch and of the two Prime Ministers, was soon completed. Its aim was to be simple and to avoid any casuistry. I will pass over the details, which have become meaningless and without interest through the collapse of the contracting Powers. With regard to the main lines laid down for negotiation, I will merely remark that the treaty was not contemplated as being for a limited period only, but was to continue automatically until notice of termination had been given. Moreover, special cases, as with Russia and France in the old treaty, were not provided for, but the *casus fœderis* was to be considered as having arisen in the event of an attack on one of the allies by two or more of the Great Powers.

The economic and military provisions naturally had to be negotiated by the technical departments concerned, and the former also by the appropriate public bodies of the two governments, according to the lines indicated by the general relations between the allies.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE POLISH SOLUTION

THE Polish question stood in a special relationship to the question of the alliance, as indeed was made clear at Spa in a supplementary memorandum. The satisfactory solution of this question was stated to be necessary to the settlements of all the other interests at stake.

Since my resignation in December 1916, Polish affairs had passed through the most varied phases without being brought any nearer to solution. For the time being the only visible sign of the kingdom of Poland, which had been declared independent on the 5th November 1916, was a regency council with inconsiderable powers. Austria-Hungary and Germany had as yet reached no decision regarding the frontiers and constitution of the new state. In the course of 1917 various schemes were discussed and rejected.

The problem had become more acute than ever, as national consciousness and the desire for an independent life had in the meantime vigorously developed in Poland. On my return to office I had to tackle the question with the determination to achieve a solution.

As this was only possible if Austria-Hungary and Germany were in agreement and if the settlement were acceptable to Poland, the main difficulty to contend with was the same as before. Opinion regarding Poland's future was as divided and changeable in Austria-Hungary as in Germany. But some consistent policy had to be followed. As I have already explained, Germany's policy had been, in principle, in agreement with mine until the spring of 1916, being based upon the Austro-Polish solution. After that date the claim to German domination was put forward and maintained for a long time in political, military, and economic matters, subject to the nominal independence of Poland. Germany's Polish policy therefore came into conflict with ours, as, under pressure from the High Command and heavy

industry, the German government had come to differ from us in its views, both of her interests and of ours, and had come to seek for security on both of our eastern frontiers in the future, through strong defensive measures rather than through establishing political conditions in Poland, such as would have been calculated to attract the Polish nation and its interests, and to tie them by alliance to the Central Powers. The result was that in the state of development reached by conditions in Poland, the free choice of Poles would have been in favour of closer association with Austria-Hungary and not with Germany, with whom such a relationship was universally dreaded in that country.

Before the collapse our policy could of course only have been based upon conditions as they actually were, but even in view of the course of Poland's destiny since, we can say that it was right and in accordance with the traditions and the interests of the monarchy, as well with the wishes of extensive circles in Poland, that the newly revived country should lean for support on the monarchy, and in association with it be received into a strong alliance with the Central Powers.

One point against the German view was that a solution running contrary to the wishes of Poland herself, even though it might be carried out by force, would be precarious. All the more so since there was a strong support for Poland's independence amongst the Western Powers, and no solution against the wishes of the Poles had any prospects of obtaining European recognition. Our aim, after all, was a peace by understanding.

On my return to the Foreign Office I found Poland still considerably excited over the Ukrainian Peace of Brest-Litovsk. In the winter of 1917-18 the Austrophile tendency had gained considerable support in Poland. Its most eloquent expression was made on the occasion of

the visit to Vienna, in January 1918, of the Polish Regent, Prince Zdislav Lubomirski, the Archbishop Kakovski, Ostrovski, and the Prime Minister Kucharzevski. They all warmly expressed their desire to introduce personal union with Austria-Hungary. After the return home, Poland had almost reached the point of offering the crown to the Emperor Charles when the cession of the Cholm district by the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk nipped these friendly feelings in the bud. Although, under the stress of the excitement aroused, a supplementary protocol was drawn up which made a partial revision of the new frontiers possible, the Poles within and without our territories were filled with grave misgivings and felt themselves completely in the dark regarding the intentions of our Polish policy.

Immediately after my return from Constantinople, the Committee of the Polish Club came to see me, led by their president Count Bavorovski, in order to give vent to their feelings on the situation and to clear matters up. I informed these gentlemen that I was keenly concerned as to Poland's future and that I should seek the earliest opportunity of resuming the interrupted discussions with the German government. I informed them that no decision regarding Poland had been arrived at at Spa, and asked them patiently to await the result of the discussions.

The discussions which I had on the 11th and 12th of June with Count Hertling and von Kühlmann, in order to pave the way to agreement upon all the matters affecting Austro-Hungarian and German interests considered at Spa, went off satisfactorily as far as the treaty of alliance was concerned. There was complete agreement as to the principles of our future diplomatic relations with Germany. The German government merely brought forward certain points of detail in modification

of our draft, and these were easily settled. On essential points we were in agreement.

On the other hand, in dealing with the Polish question substantial difficulties immediately arose. I set forth the reasons for my programme of the Austro-Polish solution, that is, for the personal union of Poland with the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, emphasising the fact that I recommended the solution as, in my opinion, best calculated to do justice to all the essential interests in the circumstances of the case, and that I did not wish to force it upon the Poles, even with Germany's consent, but that I stood for it only on the assumption that the Poles themselves would find in such a relationship with the monarchy the best guarantee for the future of their nation and for the security of their new state.

Von Kühlmann conducted most of the discussions ; he and the Chancellor opposed the solution which I was proposing, mainly for the same reason which Bethmann-Hollweg had previously advanced. They said that Germany could not tolerate such a one-sided extension of Austria-Hungary. Moreover, through union with Poland that country would have a preponderatingly Slavonic element, whereby the policy of the alliance would be in danger and the Germans in Austria would be placed in an unfavourable position. They themselves proposed the elective solution, the main feature of which was that Congress Poland should be set up as a buffer state, but with a pronounced leaning towards Germany, and should be free to choose her king, who, however, was to be resident in Warsaw. In practice that meant the exclusion of the idea of personal union with Austria-Hungary. Now, even I held that this union would have been the proper solution, only if it had been acceptable to the Poles too, but we could not allow it to be excluded *a priori*.

The German proposal would have created a situation

in which the country could not have lived. It separated Poland from Galicia, placed her under German supremacy, and contained everything that was most undesirable to the Poles.

With regard to the Austro-Polish solution, I pointed out that the Slavonic preponderance in the monarchy was merely a catchword which did not correspond to the actual facts, and was misleading. If we were always to consider all the Slavs as a political factor to be reckoned with, as a simple unit, we should logically also reckon Germany and England together on one side, as Teutons. The Poles had not, in general, Slavonic traditions and ambitions, but their own national ones. So far from there being any reason to fear that the position of Germans in Austria would suffer, their relative numbers in Old Austria would be increased through the elimination of Galicia.

Germany's very important economic interests in Poland played a very considerable part in all our discussions. On this occasion, too, they were discussed in detail, and I gave them, as always, the consideration which was their due. It was clear to us, as it was certainly clear to the Poles, that the Powers who had liberated Poland with their arms could not create conditions less favourable in any matter than had previously existed. Just as Poland would have to assist in the future, in securing our frontiers against any danger in the East, so the ancient active trade of Austria-Hungary, and still more of Germany, with Poland, and through Poland with Russia, must be maintained and developed. All questions of customs and communications would have to be reserved for negotiations between the experts, the introductory arrangements for which would have to be made as speedily as possible.

As far as the Polish question was concerned, the two days' discussions produced no result. The Germans

stated that their instructions bound them to the elective solution, and that they must return to German Headquarters for further instructions. They said that they would do so without delay, and it was agreed to continue the discussion regarding the solution on the occasion of the Chancellor's return visit to Vienna.

From this moment the difficulties and perplexities of the Polish problem increased to an extraordinary degree, and though the matter was crying to be dealt with, enormous obstacles accumulated as it dragged on its way. The German government, which had been disappointed because their proposals were not simply accepted, was very dilatory, in spite of my remonstrances, about arranging for the discussion to be continued. The Chancellor's visit was postponed. Meanwhile, considerable energy was expended in working up feeling for the conflicting points of view, at a time when excitement was already general. The German press opened a campaign against the Austro-Polish solution. Powerful persons in Germany used their influence with the National Association of the German-Austrian members, to emphasise the alleged danger of the Austro-Polish solution for the German Austrians, and they made a considerable impression. The preponderance of Poles in the monarchy was used as a bugbear, and was soon regarded as such by many members of the association. Many Germans who previously had regarded the Austro-Polish solution as likely to provide an instrument against the Czechs now became its opponents.

According to reliable sources, the idea of union with Austria-Hungary had not lost its supporters in Poland, but her misgivings regarding Brest-Litovsk had not been overcome and must be dissipated.

Galicia gave expression to her impatience at the slow rate at which progress had been made, in a resolution carried at Cracow.

I should mention that, as might have been expected, many branches of the German administration of occupation in Poland, knowing the government's point of view, endeavoured to popularise it in Poland through active if not very successful propaganda.

It may seem superfluous to enumerate the phases of a problem which later on reached a fundamental solution through factors entirely different. But the continuation of this sketch shall demonstrate that, as long as she had any influence in the matter, Austria-Hungary kept the Polish problem along lines calculated to secure her own legitimate interests, which it was her duty to consider as long as she was in existence, as well as the obvious interests of Germany and those of Poland.

Austria-Hungary no longer exists. But none of the Succession States of the monarchy grudges Poland her revival and her unity. Apart from the question of certain boundary adjustments, none of them feel that they have been damaged by Poland. They all wish to have friendly relations with her.

With all her many troubles Germany need no longer be concerned about Poland. But scarcely anybody in Germany could now hold the view that closer association with Poland would have been to Germany's advantage.

Before we could proceed to further negotiations with Germany regarding Poland, the problem became involved in a curious way in the imbroglio of Austria's internal policy. As I have already mentioned, the German National Association took up an attitude of opposition to the Austro-Polish solution. As this parliamentary group was the only reliable support of Seidler's cabinet in the Reichsrat, and I required the continued assent of the Austrian government for my policy, a very difficult position arose. The Prime Minister was torn between the demands of his German supporters and the protests and the resolutions of the

Polish Club. There was the interlude of Seidler's resignation of the 24th June, and his reappointment after a few days. It was decided to summon the Reichsrat on the 16th July. The attitude of the Austrian government to my policy would now also have to be cleared up. This was done on the occasion of the visit of Dr. Wekerle, the Hungarian Prime Minister, to Vienna on the 29th June. Agreement was arrived at regarding all the matters under negotiation with Germany, and also with regard to the Polish question.

These political difficulties coincided with the defeat on the Piave, which made a special consideration of the situation necessary.

The severity of the blow that we had suffered made it necessary for us not only to take steps on all the fronts to maintain our position, but we had also to see that the control of our policy did not waver. The object of our Polish policy especially, was to strengthen our position, and I endeavoured to prevent its being any further delayed.

On the occasion of the opening of the Council of State, which formed a new link in the development of the Polish state, I sent a telegram of congratulation to the Prime Minister, Steczkowski, on the 24th June which contained the following sentence: "I confidently hope that simultaneously with the endeavours of the Council of State, which are directed towards the internal reconstruction of the liberated Poles, the negotiations in progress between the Austro-Hungarian and the German governments may create a foundation upon which the Polish nation may herself be able to come to a decision regarding the future of Poland, such as will assure her future greatness and prosperity."

This telegram was read out at the first meeting of the Council of State, and was greeted with great applause.

In a condensed form it contained my whole Polish

programme as I had discussed it a short time before at Berlin, and as I intended to put it forward in the future. Solutions outside this framework might be wished for, and might be drawn up, but they could not be carried out unless Austria-Hungary and Germany were to encumber themselves with a political dead-weight.

As a result of my importunity, the German government again expressed its views on the Polish question on the 18th July. Count Wedel brought me a proposal for compromise from German Headquarters, the essence of which was that Germany and Austria-Hungary should invite Poland to negotiations regarding the conditions of the development of the Polish state in political, economic, and territorial matters, and that Poland should then freely choose a king. Germany expected that the choice would fall upon a candidate who could reside in Warsaw. Should this not be the case, and should the Emperor Charles or a German prince be chosen, the agreement would have to be completed through fresh negotiations.

In spite of the measure of consideration for Austria-Hungary and for Poland which the German suggestions undeniably contained, and which I, too, gratefully recognised, I regarded them as incomplete, since the impression might easily be given that the freedom of choice to be assured was to be limited to differences in the condition, according to the candidate selected, and as though the choice of personal union with Austria-Hungary, i.e. the most promising solution, implied a kind of penalty. The matter would therefore have to be considered afresh.

The German government did not fail to recognise this dilemma, but on the 3rd August drew the deduction that they must return to their proposal that the king must reside at Warsaw. I was unable to concur in this, as being a limitation of the freedom of election which had been offered in principle.

Amongst the Poles themselves there was certainly not uniformity of opinion as to the most desirable settlement for their country. The numerous experiments had confused them, Brest-Litovsk had made them suspicious. Moreover, agitation was carried on by the Polish Committee in France, which held out the prospect of our early defeat. In spite of the pains taken in German quarters to point out the advantages of German protection, they found little response. There certainly were Polish politicians who would have provisionally reconciled themselves to the German solution if this could not be avoided. They spoke in a courteous manner, which in Germany was interpreted as signifying agreement with her wishes. But sentiment generally became more and more averse from the idea of any German prerogative in Poland. The phrase "as much independence and as much territory as possible" tended more and more to become the slogan, as the national consciousness grew in strength. Feeling in favour of personal union with Austria again made notable progress. The prospect of thereby immediately securing union with Galicia, the guarantee of a purely national development as a state with equal rights, in a federation which was by tradition homogeneous with Poland, the need for support in resuming her life as a state—all these influences worked in the same direction and counteracted the impressions of the recent past. Certain leading politicians who were particularly cautious in considering their position, came to assure me of these facts as early as July.

To carry out any further propaganda in favour of personal union would have been a mistake on our part, and quite pointless. We had now to leave the Poles to make their own decision between union with Austria-Hungary and complete independence. The nation's public opinion was still divided between these two

possibilities. Austria-Hungary and Germany could no doubt lay down certain conditions arising out of their rights as occupying Power, in order to protect their interests and to prevent Poland from embarking on a policy harmful or hostile to the allies. But these conditions seemed in any case to be inherent in the natural wishes of that nation, which had always felt itself attracted towards the west.

They constituted a programme which, as I felt convinced, must be carried out at the earliest possible moment ; both from a political and a military point of view, time was pressing.

Certain urgent matters, which I shall mention later on, decided the Emperor Charles to make another journey to German Headquarters at Spa, whither I had to accompany him. The Chancellor, Count Hertling, and Vice-Admiral von Hintze, who had succeeded von Kühlmann as Secretary of State, were also there. I took advantage of this opportunity to resume, with a view to furthering our negotiations, the personal discussion regarding the Polish question, interrupted as a result of the postponement of the Chancellor's visit to Vienna, which was no doubt partly attributable to his inconstancy.

When we arrived at Spa on the 14th August we found a situation which surprised us. In my first conversation with von Hintze—the Chancellor was tired and did not put in an appearance at once—I mentioned the urgent need of continuing our negotiations regarding Poland. The Secretary of State agreed with what I said, and we then had a discussion about other matters at which the two ambassadors, Prince Hohenlohe and Count Wedel, were present.

Towards evening Count Hertling appeared and said to me with an expression of satisfaction that the Polish question was now settled. He informed me that the day before, Prince J. Radziwill, the head of the Foreign

Department at Warsaw, and the councillor, Count Ronikier, had been at Spa and offered the Emperor William the crown of Poland for a Hohenzollern. The Emperor had declined the offer and had recommended the Archduke Charles Stephen as a candidate for the throne. The Polish delegates had accepted this suggestion with great enthusiasm.

I replied to the Chancellor that I could not see that this surprising incident constituted any solution, since Austria-Hungary and Germany possessed the same rights of action with regard to Poland, and our agreement to continue negotiations regarding the Polish question until a conclusion had been reached, had not yet been fulfilled. It was essential that Poland should declare her wishes to both Powers.

The next morning the Emperor William also informed me of this account, and I repeated the reservation which I had made to the Chancellor. Before leaving I had a further conversation with Count Hertling, and it was agreed that the negotiations should be continued forthwith, and that the Chancellor and the Secretary of State should come to Vienna for this purpose. On my return home I received news from Warsaw that Prince Radziwill would arrive at Vienna on the 20th August. I had my first conversation with him on the 21st, and it was followed by several others during his three days' stay. I found him to be a Polish patriot of distinguished mentality who avoided all catch phrases, and a man of wise judgment.

After telling what I had heard at Spa and hearing his account of it, I could not refrain from remarking that, as far as I could see, it had been a pretty complete misunderstanding on both sides at Spa.

In anycase, the presence of Prince Radziwill enlightened both sides as to the position, and promised to be of advantage in further dealing with the Polish question.

Prince Radziwill said to me that it was not his purpose to make proposals at Spa, to give assurances, or to propose or request the names of candidates to the throne. He merely wanted to emphasise the pressing urgency for setting up the Polish state, and to request Germany, as he had now also done at Vienna, to lend a hand in this task without further delay. He requested that the Poles should be informed of the essential conditions, and more particularly that the future boundaries of their country should be indicated.

The responsible German parties assembled at Spa, did not leave any doubt in the mind of the Polish delegates that Germany did not desire the assimilation of Poland with Austria-Hungary in a personal union. This would be damaging to Germany, because it would cut her off from her connections in the east, and because it would endanger her alliance with Austria-Hungary in the future. Slavs and Magyars alone would determine policy in the monarchy, and sooner or later would be able to induce a change of attitude.

The visitors from Poland wanted precise information, and inquired as to the German conditions, since they were aware that, in the event of a personal union, Austria-Hungary would be willing to unite Galicia with Poland. In any case the Poles also claimed the whole territory of Congress Poland. He, Radziwill, had not concealed the fact, during a personal conversation with the German Emperor, that the Poles felt themselves more attracted by Austria-Hungary than by Germany.

The answer to the delegates' question was duly vouchsafed. If Poland chose a king who would reside at Warsaw, no frontier adjustments of any importance in the west would be necessary, the Cholm government would be given back, and Poland would conclude a military convention with Germany alone. If Poland were to choose the Emperor Charles as king, the considera-

tions regarding military security in the east would again apply. In that case Poland would have to make considerable territorial and other sacrifices.

Prince Radziwill and Count Ronikier were then asked whether they had already agreed upon a candidate for the throne. They denied this, remarking that certain parties were forming combinations, in which connection the names of Prince Augustus William of Prussia, the Archduke Charles Stephen, Prince Cyril of Bulgaria, and others had been mentioned. The Emperor William had seized upon the name of the Archduke Charles Stephen and had commended him most warmly to the Poles.

Prince Radziwill explained to me that the personal union with Austria-Hungary was the solution most sympathetic to the Poles and, as he believed, also the most useful, but that Germany was now setting up an obstacle to this solution in the form of a considerable cession of territory. He asked me what we could do to protect Poland from paying this penalty.

Comparing what I had heard at Spa, and Prince Radziwill's action, I now had a fairly complete picture of what had happened there. The Prince, too, remarked to me that "now everything was absolutely clear."

Hereupon I explained to Prince Radziwill the principles underlying our position in the Polish question, which had latterly been accepted by Germany too. These were that the state of Poland should be set up in agreement with Germany, and that after negotiating with the Poles, there should be a free election of a king, and security for the essential and legitimate interests of the Central Powers. I said that a one-sided solution could not be induced by pressure. According to our agreement with Germany, the existing state of affairs required negotiations to be speedily carried out, first with Germany alone, and then to invite Poland to join us so that she

would have an opportunity to give authentic expression to her national desires, before both allies.

These negotiations could neither be superseded nor avoided by one-sided agreements.

I begged that the Poles should not allow their free decision to be affected by the threat of considerable loss of Polish territory if they selected the personal union. A one-sided settlement of the matter was impossible. It would almost be a new partition of Poland. We would not have concurred in such a solution. Any plan for annexing any considerable portion of Poland would merely make the conclusion of peace more difficult, and peace was the aim both of ourselves and Germany. We could scarcely expect that in a peace of understanding, our enemies would leave Germany with considerable portions of Polish territory. During the negotiations there would be abundant opportunity for convincing Germany, who had a quite intelligible object in view, but was starting out from incorrect premises, that the setting up of such alternatives had no purpose.

Prince Radziwill left Vienna obviously satisfied with the comprehensive explanation which he had been able to give and to receive. We had agreed that he should now prepare the ground at Warsaw for taking part in the negotiations, which were to follow immediately upon the preliminary conversations which still had to be conducted with Germany.

From the 3rd to the 5th September, von Hintze stayed at Vienna. The Chancellor was still suffering too much from the effects of his recent illness to face the journey. Polish affairs were again discussed in detail, and we were obviously on the way to a clear understanding. With regard to the procedure in further negotiations, it was laid down that the experts should meet at Berlin and first prepare the material for the negotiations in all details. I sent our Warsaw representative, the am-

bassador von Ugron, to the meeting, and gave him instructions, based upon the free decision as to the political fate of their country that was to be assured for the Poles. In the event of the personal union with Austria-Hungary being accepted, the form in which the Pragmatic Sanction should be extended to Poland as an independent state was to be considered in the meantime, in agreement with the governments of the two states of the monarchy.

The preliminary discussions at Berlin took place during the second half of September. The result of them was eminently satisfactory, in that it appeared that practically all the differences between the German point of view and our own had disappeared.

This was but a platonic satisfaction. The fate that was upon us took out of our hands any further intervention in Polish affairs.

On the 8th November, Poland drew the logical conclusion from the altered circumstances and proclaimed her absolute independence.

CHAPTER XIX

JUGO-SLAVIA

IN taking up office for the second time as Minister for Foreign Affairs, I felt a natural concern for the development of affairs in the Southern Slav territories, having had the administration of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The whole Southern Slav problem was represented in Bosnia-Herzegovina as in a microcosm. It raised problems which were intimately connected in their effects and causes with all the Southern Slav territories, within and outside the monarchy. Though, in spite of general hardship, Bosnia and Herzegovina had been an example of peace and order during the war, yet the public had been affected by the spiritual emotion of their fellow-nationals, and were tensely awaiting the fate which the conclusion of the war had in store for them. The neighbouring countries with similar populations did not fail to count upon Bosnia-Herzegovina in reckoning up their prospects for the future. The fate of these countries would have to be decided with and through Austria-Hungary, or against her. This dilemma already existed before the war in a most marked form from the time of the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The war, which was certainly not waged on account of the Southern Slavs, was bound to have a decisive effect upon them. Our task was carefully to take into consideration the results of the war in those territories, and to ensure our freedom of action after the war in our southern territories. The most impressive fact in this connection was the extraordinary courage with which Croats, Slovenes, and Bosnians everywhere fought against the enemy. And yet we must not overlook the fact that the Croats were not satisfied with the arrangements under which they were living, and that the Bosnia-Herzegovinians were wishing for a final settlement of their constitutional position. This indicated the policy which all signs pointed to as being the right one. There was no occasion, either

in the interest of the monarchy or in the aspirations of the peoples concerned, to seek to achieve what has actually taken place since the war, the union of all the Southern Slav people; in spite of the Slav-Croat-Slovene kingdom and the peace treaty, the last word has not yet been said in this matter, racial antagonism between the Serbs and Croats being what it is. But we had to consider making greater freedom of action possible for the Southern Slavs, and arranging a better grouping of them, as after the war they would inevitably have achieved this as a corollary of their brave defence of the monarchy and of their native territory.

Though these questions forced themselves urgently upon one's political consideration, it was exceedingly difficult to tackle them. The individual branches of the Southern Slav peoples were rooted in the Austrian and the Hungarian constitution. In the course of time this had undergone changes which, though based upon ancient historical claims, sometimes conflicted with other firmly established rights, or else, in their application, with what the lawmakers had had in view. If, as a result, satisfaction was not given, the blame was thrown sometimes on the arrangements themselves, and sometimes on the manner in which they were carried out.

This gives the key to the explanation of the growing dissatisfaction in all the Southern Slav territories of the monarchy. It was practically irrelevant whether this dissatisfaction was completely justified or not, since such moods arise from internal feelings and external suggestion, from the accumulation of a multitude of individual grievances, and also from a sense of national restraint; in fact from various imponderable influences, all of which, however, converged to one line of thought. Dissatisfaction cannot be eliminated by proving that it is unjustified. The causes of it were generally examined by the standard of the various existing regulations

in the individual Southern Slav territories of the monarchy, and they were therefore subjected to a criterion which, *a priori*, was of no interest to the Southern Slavs.

The Hungarian-Croat Settlement of 1868 laid down the political relations between the two countries in a White Paper, which Francis Deák had handed to Croatia, but it had not clarified the constitutional position; the ancient title and claim to Dalmatia were reserved for the "Regnum Tripartitum," while Austria was left in effective possession of the country. In this Croatia-Slavonia had really never concurred, but neither had Dalmatia. It was a half settlement which left a festering wound.

Its financial and economic conditions were based upon calculations which had not been put to the test. For a long course of years they furnished inexhaustible material for complaints that Hungary benefited at the expense of Croatia. Partial concessions were obtained from time to time, but, on the whole, Croatia-Slavonia became convinced that the settlement was unfavourable to that country.

Sentiment developed on similar lines in Dalmatia, which complained of neglect. In Croatia-Slavonia economic grievances went hand in hand with national grievances. There was constant friction as to the limits of Hungary's sovereignty, and her own individual political individuality as laid down by the laws. Hungary might sometimes show a conciliatory attitude regarding regulations jointly affecting the two countries, but in the meantime the Croat-Slovene demands would have been increased. Friction resulted from the daily routine of government, friction not so much between Budapest and Agram as between the Croat-Slovene provincial government, which carried out the ideas of the Hungarian government, and the local population and the parties in the Diet; on occasion it would lead to violent explosions and "incidents."

Hungary felt in a general way secure in the possession of the legal settlement and material force. In Croatia, besides the provincial government there was the parliamentary activity of the Diet, which played various rôles. A majority, generally in favour of the existing order, dealt with matters coming within the sphere of local autonomy, while national wishes were cared for by minorities. These kept growing in strength, and their demands took more and more the form of greater independence for their country and union with their Croatian fellow-countrymen. The Greater Croatia programme was obviously winning a more extensive popularity. It embraced Dalmatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina and, generally speaking, limited itself to the actual Croatian populations, to whom things Slovene and Serbian were originally foreign, in spite of the Croat-Serb coalition, which for years united Serbs and Croats in Croatia-Slavonia to form a majority in the Diet for party purposes.

Only a few years ago it would scarcely have been possible to have found a Serb, a Slovene, or a Croat who would have replied to any one asking him his nationality, that he was Southern Slav. This used to be a linguistic conception; the Serbs brought it into general use for political purposes, when the course of events seemed to make it possible for them, conscious of their growing power, to aim at the union of all Southern Slavs under Serbian hegemony. They knew that none of the three branches would give up their name in favour of either of the others. Hence the joint name was selected.

That was during the war. Croats and Slovenes must have overcome a sharp repugnance before they acquiesced in the new ideas.

The change of sentiment was induced by the complaint embodied by their politicians in terse formulæ

and very skilfully popularised. They stated that the Croats on the one hand had not succeeded in years of endeavour to secure a revision, or at least a liberal interpretation of the Settlement, so that they ended by throwing themselves into the arms of the Serbs in order to escape the Hungarians, and that the Slovenes on the other hand had similarly failed to win from the Austrian government any sympathy for their aims, and were unable to break through the dividing line of the Crown territories.

In the fever of war, national aspirations warmed up to such an extent that they began to furnish a fertile field for internal and external separatist propaganda. As yet this scarcely showed itself in any open movement. The traditional subservience of the population and the severity of the war regulations ensured that this should be so. Moreover, those who were organising the change of sentiment seemed generally to have worked with such prudence that the authorities found no sufficient occasion for sending in any very alarming reports on the situation. At any rate, I observed that neither government was disquieted to the extent that would have been natural in the actual state of affairs.

I held it my duty, if possible, to change this. I was, moreover, in a position, through my recent experiences and observations in the Bosnia-Herzegovina administration, the direction of which I still kept in my hands for the time being, to gain information on many points which usefully supplemented the observations of the Austrian and Hungarian departments.

I therefore warned both Vienna and Budapest against optimism and brought to the knowledge of the Hungarian government any particularly significant facts which had not been reported to it, while I constantly emphasised the necessity of immediately putting into operation such reforms in accordance with the national

wishes of the Southern Slav and the obvious needs of the time, as were in any way possible for the two governments, in order still to save the loyal element of the population, to anticipate the influence on the masses of the example given by the Czechs and to hinder the realisation of the Southern Slav Corfu programme of Dr. Trumbic.

I will not argue whether the two governments would have been capable of meeting the inevitable needs of the time in the Southern Slav administrative districts, or whether the rigid framework defined by the Crown territories boundaries and the Croat-Hungarian settlement, the force of tradition in general, and the opposition of various responsible quarters, were what prevented changes being made even in accordance with the facts that had been realised. In any case, there was the obvious difficulty in the fact that while a uniform campaign of the most dangerous propaganda was being carried on throughout all the Southern Slav districts, there was little or no co-ordination in the Government's policy in the Slovene, Croatian, and Serbian territories of both states of the monarchy, and of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

It was urgently necessary for Austria-Hungary's policy in general, that this state of affairs should be remedied. I did not hesitate to point this out to them. It was essential that both governments should collaborate in their own sphere of action, should remain in close touch on all matters, and should jointly elaborate decisions affecting them both, at a time when there was a strong movement in Croatia for the reunion of Dalmatia with the "crippled" kingdom, which aroused keen sympathy in the matter when Bosnia-Herzegovina wanted at last to see her constitutional position regularised, and when the policy which was threatening to

cut the monarchy entirely off from the sea, had involved the Slovenes as well.

I brought up the matter in Baden on the 30th May at a joint ministerial conference at which the Emperor presided, and it was there decided that both governments should immediately enter into negotiations with each other regarding the settlement by agreement of Southern Slav affairs, and especially as to the means of solving the Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Dalmatian problem.

From that time, though the negotiations were not begun, the Hungarian Prime Minister, Dr. Wekerle, kept asking his Austrian colleague to start the negotiations. Seidler would agree, a date would be fixed, and it would invariably be postponed. I remained in ignorance of the causes of this delay, although I too was pressing for negotiations to start. Time was precious. The Entente did not fail to realise this, and as early as the 6th June, declared as its definite war aim the independence of Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, and Yugoslavia. That in itself discounted the value of any conciliatory move on our part at such a late moment, but we could still aim at uniting the elements which wished still to remain loyal to the monarchy, and especially to rescue the Croats from absorption by Serbia in a single state. This could only be effected by that country's union with Hungary, though in some form adapted to the times. On the other hand, neighbourly relations with the Triple Alliance were essential for Hungary's consolidation.

Unluckily the Croatian-Serbian coalition was at the helm in Croatia. With the provincial government which it formed, it played for a long time a deceptive game with Hungary, who was lulled into false security, by pretending to be friendly to the union and simulating loyalty. The government at Budapest for a long time

believed Hungarian interests to be secure under the administration of Banus Mehalovic. In reality his rule offered no obstacle to the general Southern Slav agitation, which developed its activities in each individual village, adopting a Greater Croatia or a Serbophile colour, according to local sentiment.

In the meantime Dr. Wekerle carried on active negotiations with Croatian politicians of various parties who had been summoned to Budapest. I followed these discussions attentively, and was astonished after a time to hear that they were progressing favourably, since the wishes of the Croats were for the most part moderate, and not impossible to fulfil. Those that he mentioned certainly were not. They were concerned with incidentals affecting the practical application of the settlement. But I was aware that the Croats, especially those that were attached to the union with Hungary, were aiming at a fundamental revision of the Settlement of 1867, and at the union of all Croats. My impression, and I did not conceal it from Wekerle, was that the conversations would proceed in Budapest in the fog of a great misunderstanding. The Croatian politicians either believed that it was useless to advance in Budapest, claims which they knew could not be entertained there, or else they were merely carrying on these discussions in order to divert attention from their real intentions, which, at the time, must have been practically settled with all of them. But perhaps it was already too late for these negotiations.

The Hungarian government was inadequately informed as to the true state of affairs in Croatia-Slavonia. Banus's attitude was becoming marked. The principal representative of the central government at Budapest, he was also the first official of the country responsible to the Croatian Diet in local government matters; moreover, by nationality he was a Croat.

At times of unclouded agreement this was an admirable arrangement. In the midst of the intense national ferment of the last year of the war, Banus had been almost forced to play a double game, especially if, as always appeared to be the case, he wished to place himself at the service of the most radical tendencies and to use his official authority to conceal the separatist preparations.

In order to do so, however, he had to retain his post, which became difficult after a time. Dr. Wekerle had in the end not been able to close his eyes to the fact that Mihalovic was not a suitable person for representing the Hungarian government in Croatia. Banus was given to understand this, and a successor was looked for. When Mihalovic refused to take a hint and no inspired newspaper announcements, nomination of candidates to succeed him, etc., produced any effect, he was asked to resign. He went to Baden for an audience, and complained to the monarch bitterly of Wekerle and his Croatian policy, but remained quietly at his post. This determined, passive opposition embarrassed Wekerle not a little. In the end Mihalovic was summoned to Budapest to explain his insubordination. He refused to come, alleging that his official duties prevented him.

This was open disobedience. From that moment the bond between Hungary and Croatia was actually broken. Banus's attitude was a gauge of the point reached by the mounting flood of the separatist movement.

The Serb-Croat-Slovene movement, which, under the impulse and following the example of the Czech organisation, was working directly for separation from the monarchy, had been able to carry on its work comparatively undisturbed, owing to the passivity, impotence, or connivance of one part of the departments of government. In every village signatures were collected for a popular vote for separating from Hungary. The supporters of the constitutional bond were drawn more and

more into the struggle as the impossibility of winning from Hungary the extension of Croat rights was demonstrated. It seemed to be the dispensation of fate that Budapest, accustomed to paying small attention to affairs in Croatia, now also refused to recognise the position in time.

I placed at the disposal of the Hungarian government the results of any observations I was in a position to make in Bosnia-Herzegovina. These were countered by more rosily coloured reports of their own, which mentioned considerable agitation against the state, but failed to recognise its true character and the rapidity with which it was spreading. When at last the facts could no longer be ignored, it was too late. Nobody lifted a finger to preserve the association of centuries.

It was too late also for Bosnia-Herzegovina. From the moment when Croatia-Slovenia and Dalmatia seceded, the destiny of Bosnia, which was surrounded by them, was decided—a destiny which, being quite different, should have been considered beforehand.

Until Southern Slav affairs had reached a very advanced state of development, the new countries of the monarchy had been prepared to let their fate be settled in agreement with the monarchy, but they soon wished it to be made clear what their fate was to be in order to gain possession of all the political rights which still remained to be settled. After the convulsions of the year 1914 Bosnia-Herzegovina had reconciled herself to the prospect of having her constitutional position decided when peace was established. She provided some of the finest troops of the monarchy. Politically the country was absolutely at peace. In the meantime public opinion was considering the various possibilities of the future.

Wishes were very divided. In general the Catholics were attracted towards Croatia and the Mohammedans towards Hungary, while the Serbs were more inclined

to favour extensive autonomy for Bosnia-Herzegovina. A considerable portion of the Serbian intelligentsia and of the Serbian commercial classes leaned strongly to Serbia, especially from the moment when the Entente, and therefore Serbia's policy, looked like winning.

As long as the monarchy existed there was no danger of losing Bosnia-Herzegovina if only the two countries could agree upon a solution of the Bosnia-Herzegovinian question, and upon such a solution as would give the country extensive autonomy. It is not a country that can be absorbed or partitioned, as those in power to-day will soon see.

The two states of the monarchy could not reach any decision as to the manner in which Bosnia-Herzegovina should be incorporated, and they avoided the difficulty through delay. Many responsible quarters were not averse to continuing the provisional régime, even after the war. This would have had to be prevented at all costs. Croatia was openly advancing her claims to union with Bosnia-Herzegovina. Hungary regarded these countries as belonging to the territory of St. Stephen's Crown, and therefore put forward for their incorporation the same claim as for the union with Croatia, Slavonia, and Dalmatia. The only question for Hungary was, whether the union should be effected directly with the kingdom of Hungary, or in conjunction with Croatia. Hungarian government circles favoured direct union with an extension of autonomy. There was no difference of opinion between Hungary and Croatia regarding the fact that Dalmatia should return to her ancient historical connection with Croatia. Geography and history, as well as the inclinations of the people, were against an association with Austria, whose claims to compensation and economic interest would have had to be adjusted through a treaty.

As soon as Croatia showed the firm intention of giving

effect to her national demands, it became impossible to continue to deal with the affairs of Bosnia-Herzegovina in a dilatory manner. The least that could be done was to prove to Bosnia-Herzegovina that the question of her constitutional position was on the agenda, and that the fate of that country would not be decided without co-operation. The claims of Croatia were not thereby turned down in advance, but neither was Bosnia-Herzegovina forced to make any choice unless she wished.

I did not succeed in obtaining the agreement of the two governments to any such gesture, though the necessity for it could no longer be denied. I suggested successively various ways of approach, with a view to reassuring the population that their country's future would immediately be dealt with, and that they would be consulted in the matter. In this I was effectively supported by my successor in the joint finance ministry, Baron Spitzmüller. The governments were unable to get over their uneasiness lest thereby the authority of the parliaments in dealing with the constitutional position of Bosnia-Herzegovina should suffer. The legal position was preserved, but the Southern Slav territories were lost, one and all.

The administration of Bosnia-Herzegovina begged for an authoritative word to pacify a bewildered populace, which had been worked up by agitators. I was unable to give any such pronouncement. With a proved loyalty the provincial government preserved absolute order until the departure of our troops.

The monarchy's activities in Bosnia-Herzegovina will leave deep traces on the histories of the countries of the Lower Danube, who are destined in the future to cultivate even more intensive relations with one another than in the past. Relieved of the political bond which was forced upon them, these neighbouring countries will now for

the first time fully realise the extent to which they are mutually dependent in all their needs. We, the last official representatives of the great Danubian monarchy, honestly hoped and believed that it would be possible to unite in a work of common civilisation, all the peoples of the Danube under the wing of a political system resting upon the foundation of the greatest freedom, and to clear away all the ancient débris of national misunderstandings, or rather of the obsolete institutions which had arisen from earlier requirements. Destiny, as expressed in the obstinacy of others or in our own shortcomings, has disposed otherwise. The individual peoples, whose fate was at issue, stand there in all their strength, determined to go their own way, in independence. Of their own free will they will come together, because they are mutually complementary. History is not merely the recollection of the past, but also the basis of the future.

The Bosnian episode will always be an honourable page in the history of Austria-Hungary's Balkan policy. Through the occupation after the Congress of Berlin, peace was restored to the country. It could at the time neither remain with Turkey, nor be left to itself, or to Serbia. Opposition between the three faiths had become too acute to allow the internal disputes to die down. Austria-Hungary taught them, and through her power compelled them, to tolerate each other on the basis of an absolute equality of rights. In the end this became established, and remains for all time a positive gain. Bosnia-Herzegovina did not like the occupation, which, with all its advantages, was after all a foreign rule, but she learnt to respect it, and was able to make very good use of the work of progress which it inaugurated. Many of our officials enjoyed the fullest confidence of the people, who particularly valued their complete impartiality in matters affecting the various faiths.

Austria-Hungary's forty years of rule in Bosnia-

Herzegovina achieved a most valuable work for civilisation, and paved the way for the further development of those countries in every direction.

They entered upon their new conditions, having reached a respectable stage of development, economically strengthened, with a settled administration and ordered finances. I believe that they will be fair to the memory of the Austro-Hungarian régime.

CHAPTER XX

THE NECESSITY FOR PEACE

DURING my second period of office as Minister for Foreign Affairs I could have but one aim—to bring peace about, which, from the nature of the case, would be a peace by understanding. It was no longer possible to win the war, but we might yet turn a favourable moment to account and furnish sufficient inducement to the enemy to make certain sacrifices in order to bring about a termination of the war, which would have secured him his principal aim with honour and spared him further losses.

We did not achieve this object. Fate went its way uncompromisingly to the terrible end. I had built my last modest hope upon the fact that we were in a position absolutely to adapt the peace to those principles which were always on the lips of our enemies. But in the end those principles proved to be merely a snare into which we were lured. The enemy was determined to give free play to his desire to annihilate us. His high-sounding speeches were a means to this end, no less than his artillery or the hunger blockade.

My only object in recounting peace efforts which led to nothing, is to show that in this final stage of the war, and especially after both the great German offensives in Northern France, and Austria-Hungary's offensives on the Piave had failed, into which we had thrown our final energies, nothing could have affected the enemy's determination to vanquish us utterly.

I had the privilege of inaugurating my new period of office with an act of peace: on the 7th May I signed the Treaty of Rumania, which was already completed at Bukarest. I would gladly have regarded this peace treaty as a good omen for my future efforts at bringing about the general peace which everyone longed for, but for the melancholy consideration that the effectiveness even of this treaty depended upon whether we should succeed in

carrying on the general work of peace in a not too distant future.

For the time being we could not think of resuming our activities in this direction. It was psychologically the most unfavourable moment.

During the second half of May the German offensive in the Champagne district had been launched in full force ; it involved a long series of battles which both sides regarded as being of a decisive nature. Austria-Hungary, who, without endangering her *moral*, could not continue to look on inactively while the Italian front was strengthened by plentiful auxiliaries from the allies, simultaneously prepared for an offensive on the south-western front, which did not begin until the middle of June, and represented the uttermost resources of the monarchy.

It was generally felt that a turning-point in the war had been reached. It was obvious that such a solemn moment in the world drama was not suitable for putting out new peace feelers. Both combatants hoped that the issue of these battles, as they would be determined by the general military situation, not to mention the American forces who were now becoming effective, would leave them in a favourable position and possibly with a decisive advantage. A new and clear picture of the resources on each side would have to be obtained before it would be possible to examine the prospects of any steps taken to end the struggle. But if, after a few weeks or months, the inevitable slackening in the military operations occurred, I was determined unflinchingly to pursue the part of negotiations even at the risk of its being spoken of again as a "peace offensive," by which phrase our enemies liked to imply that we were using an unfair means to secure a substitute for our lack of success in the field.

There is no doubt that the new blood introduced by

the American forces had increased the enemy's confidence in final victory, and even if our offensive went off successfully there might seem to be little prospect of inducing an opponent to come to an understanding, who was never tired of proclaiming his will to conquer, and who could bear and make good losses more easily than the Central Powers.

And yet our desire and need for peace urged us to pursue the most slender hope. It was better to be disappointed than neglectful. Possibly the Entente might entertain the idea of a compromise, from a consideration of the fact that the Western Powers would not care to owe their salvation entirely to America; and after all, our enemies might be prepared to show a certain adaptability, in view of the enormous sacrifices which the war would still entail.

I gave public expression, as opportunity offered, to the sentiments by which I was actuated, as I waited for a suitable moment for throwing out peace feelers.

On the 21st June, that is, during our most strenuous battles on the Piave, several Social-Democrat members called on me, in accordance with the decision of the Vienna Labour Party, to demand better food conditions and peace. After a short sketch of the position, I gave them my firm assurance that we were far from wishing *to prolong the war even for a day*, for the sake of making a conquest or gaining imperialistic ends, and that we would do everything and neglect nothing that might assist in bringing about peace negotiations, with the slightest prospects of success.

I certainly had to add that our opponents had unfortunately not shown the slightest intention of entering into serious discussion.

Somewhat later, on the 15th July 1918—our military position in the meantime became exceedingly difficult—I pointed out, in an article dealing with the general

position at the time, how deceptive the idealistic phrases of our enemies were, because they were falsely applied. I demonstrated that "in as far as they are not seeking to acquire territory they are fighting against windmills. They are exhausting their own resources and ours in order to found a new world order on the ruins of civilisation, whose principles as far as they are practical are warmly approved by us too, and could be realised much more easily and completely through the peaceful co-operation of all peoples, including ourselves."

The programmes containing Wilson's messages, which were sent out to appeal to humanity at large, the slogans of justice and humanity, and of the protection of small nations used by the Entente Powers themselves, had nearly become a general world programme, as Wilson already recognised in his Note of 18th December 1916. Only we did not wish to see a one-sided application of these principles, entirely against ourselves.

Our enemy's point of view, which is already susceptible of impartial judgment, did not suffer so much from mistakes of judgment as from false assumptions and incorrect information as to the facts, from which it was logically inevitable that false conclusions should be drawn. Austria-Hungary was fighting for her bare existence, the right to which could not with justice be denied her. The results of her defeat prove how well founded were her fears, but they also prove what a mistake the Entente made in destroying the monarchy. Our former enemies now no doubt realise themselves that they have destroyed an organic union of people, the natural product of politico-geographical necessity, which, though in need of reform, was capable of survival, and whose parts cannot now find their equilibrium, while they are still mutually dependent upon one another, and will have to establish after struggles and convulsions those contacts with one another which are a necessity of nature.

The unfavourable development of the military position between June and July 1915 naturally did not assist Austria and Germany to advance the cause of peace. The reaction in the enemy countries could not leave any doubt on this point. On the 2nd July, in the British House of Commons, Mason drew the government's attention to my most recent expressions in favour of peace, and demanded that, in accordance with Balfour's promises, Austria-Hungary's suggestion should be considered in order that peace might be achieved. Lord Robert Cecil's reply amounted to an absolute refusal. He read out a dissentient expression of opinion regarding the treaty with Rumania, and deduced from it the justification to refuse to introduce any negotiations with Germany and Austria-Hungary, as long as the peace treaties in the east had not been revised.

On Independence Day, the 4th July, Wilson made a speech at Washington's grave, in which he laid down four points containing the objects that must be realised before peace could be achieved, objects in which all peoples of good will could concur with conviction, and regarding which Wilson proceeded to state: "We may sum up these great aims in a single phrase: We are striving for the rule of right, based upon the agreement of the governed, and supported by the organised public opinion of mankind. We can attain these great objects if we examine the desires and plans of statesmen and proceed to execute them. They can be realised only by reconciling the desires of the thinking peoples of the world with their longing and hope for justice."

These were again the words of Wilson endeavouring to bring about peace and understanding, and poor though the prospects were, they carried a challenge in support of our endeavours.

It was the whole aim and object of my efforts to get the wishes and plans of the peoples expressed through their leading statesmen.

As at that time it was scarcely possible to approach the enemy Powers direct, I published on the 15th July a memorandum to the two Prime Ministers regarding the position in foreign affairs.

This document, which I quote in the appendix, demonstrates how I clung to the idea of a peace by understanding, apprehensive though I felt of the approaching catastrophe and of the dictated peace which was coming. My sentiments culminate in the words: "What we stated on the 12th December 1916 still represents our attitude, though the terrific events which have happened since then have done much to change the world position. We are still carrying on as resolutely as ever our defensive war, consecrated by innumerable sacrifices, though we are always ready to arrive at an understanding such as will secure the honour, the existence, and the free development of our people."

The reception accorded to this statement by the enemy press was not encouraging. The French government press in particular was completely unfriendly. The *Temps* said that: "The key to peace is not to be found at the Ballhausplatz, but in the Champagne." The *Journal des Débats* was of opinion that I "distorted the views which President Wilson had expressed on behalf of the whole Entente." How have the Entente since treated Wilson's thoughts and words in their application?

The tone of the opposition papers, on the other hand, was sympathetic. My appeal awoke a true echo in Lord Lansdowne, whose letter of the 1st August 1918 was decidedly friendly, and in many points was in complete agreement with what I had said.

I had chosen the only path, which I still consider practicable, in the exceedingly difficult circumstances of the time, as I could not bear to stand by with folded arms watching a cruel fate overtake us.

I thought it might be possible to bring the representatives of all the combatants together at an informal preliminary conference which would clear up the position, in order to get to know what their claims and expectations really were and to have an opportunity of eliminating misunderstanding which hampered public discussion and made a rapprochement more difficult. I wanted to find a way out of the speechifying of the combatants, which had grown into stereotyped war-cries. The new world-order should not be built on the insecure foundations of vengeance and penalties, but a preliminary exchange of ideas should reveal the basis of a peace destined to be permanent.

On the 23rd July I first submitted my idea to the Emperor Charles at Eckartsau. I only dealt with the main lines, as I had not yet drafted the details of any definite proposal. The monarch, always anxious to assist the cause of peace, expressed his approval of my plan, and consented to it in principle.

The moment was a serious one. Time pressed. The first news of weariness on the German front had been received. The pressure of the enemy was terrific. It gave the impression of a ceaselessly mounting flood. For the first time Germany became actually aware of the extent of the American menace. The illusions of a victorious peace, which in spite of everything had perhaps been clung to in many German quarters, had to be given up.

A tolerable peace would be possible, only if Wilson were determined to make the points in his programme the essential basis of the future settlement of the relations between peoples. It was then in his power to do so, and we could not but assume that it was his wish. His later vacillations, the result of the position of the partner "who had done his bit" and whom one did not consider any longer, could not be foreseen.

Unless an effort could be made to obtain a preliminary discussion of the peace basis, there was nothing but the prospect of an early defeat or, at best, of a rearguard action continued until we were completely exhausted.

There could not be any question of deceiving the enemy as to the state of affairs, by affecting confidence. On the other side, nobody had any doubt now of ultimate victory. But as a general rule the enemy rated our power of resistance as being greater than it really was, and reckoned with a longer period of effort as necessary to effect our subjugation. This fact might induce him to enter into discussions with us in order to determine what measure of success he would achieve if he immediately brought the war, which was acutely affecting him too, to an end. The hope of such an event was very slender. But I felt that even this very slight hope should be pursued. The course of our fate should not be prejudiced by any neglect on our part. It would be easier to bear the inevitable if no attempt had been omitted to prevent it.

We could only contemplate taking some step that, if the worst came to the worst, would do no harm. We were no longer in a position to take up an attitude like that, for instance, of the German Chancellor, Count Hertling, who stated as late as July 1918, with reference to Germany's desire for peace, that "Germany would certainly not decline to fall in with the suggestion, if duly accredited representatives of the enemy Powers, expressly authorised by their governments, gave us to understand that conversations were possible." It was of no use to wait for the enemy to take the initiative in this way, and it was in any case too late. We would have to take it ourselves. The position on the fronts, regarding which I assumed that the two army commands could not be under a complete delusion, made it necessary for us to seek

peace. We could still avoid making a formal offer of peace, which would almost have amounted to capitulation, if we succeeded in inducing a non-committal exchange of ideas between all the combatants, such as would have resulted in a provisional general idea as to the conditions on which the enemy Powers would meet us at the conference table. I undertook to attempt this, and to obtain the assent of our allies.

The Emperor Charles approved my plan, and was prepared to go to the German Headquarters at Spa in order to examine the position on both sides in a completely open discussion, and to come to a decision regarding my proposal.

On the 14th August the Emperor Charles, as I have already mentioned in discussing the affairs of Poland, arrived at Spa, accompanied by me and the Chief of the General Staff, Freiherr von Arz. Count Hertling and the Secretary of State were there too.

German Headquarters did not present the usual picture of the central organ of the war machine working with quiet confidence. The atmosphere was distinctly depressed. Grave concern was depicted upon the faces of the German High Command and suite, with all their soldierly bearing. Conversation was carried on in more hushed tones than usual.

The Emperor Charles first had a long conversation with the Emperor William alone. At the same time I conferred with the German Secretary of State in the presence of the ambassadors, Count Wedel and Prince Hohenlohe. After an unvarnished statement of the position, I suggested that the Powers of the Quadruple Alliance should invite the enemy to send delegates at the earliest possible moment to a *confidential and non-committal discussion* in a neutral country, and that they should be instructed to communicate the views of their governments, and to introduce a complete and frank

exchange of ideas regarding the questions relating to the creation of conditions favourable to peace.

Herr von Hintze took note of my proposal, in order to communicate it to the Chancellor, who was prevented by ill-health from taking part in the discussion.

After dinner I had the opportunity of informing the Emperor William of the purpose of our visit. The arguments, both of the Emperor Charles, who recounted to me his conversation with the German Emperor later on the same evening, and of myself, were directed to demonstrating decisively that peace must be concluded, and that a new winter campaign was impossible, at any rate for the Austro-Hungarian army. The procedure outlined by me would in the circumstances be the most suitable for introducing peace negotiations.

The Emperor William was considerably impressed by our argument, but reserved his decision till the following morning, when he would have had a further discussion with the Chancellor.

On the morning of the 15th August I visited Count Hertling—Hohenlohe and Wedel were already with him—and I strongly urged him to accept my proposal, as offering the only possibility, though it was not a very hopeful one, of arriving at a discussion with our powerful enemy on equal terms.

The critical nature of the position was not disputed by the Germans, and no essential opposition was raised to my proposal, but they wished to consider the matter a little further and then discuss it again. This would not involve any loss of time, since the German troops were established on the Hindenburg line, which could be held for a long time. The resulting pause in the offensive would give an opportunity for negotiations. I warned them against procrastination, since every day's delay would lessen our capacity for negotiating with the enemy.

I was promised that the Chancellor and the Secretary of State would visit Vienna as soon as possible. The necessary decisions would be taken there.

After seeing the Chancellor I called on the Emperor William in the villa in which he was living (the Belgian owner of which vowed to raze it to the ground after the war because the German Emperor had lived in it). I found the monarch, who had obviously been undergoing a severe internal struggle, quite ready to consider peace. He said that he would have the courage to offer peace, but he wished to wait for a little until about the autumn, when the German army would have completed their retreat and, having secured their position, would be able to lend the necessary weight to our opening move. On this occasion, too, I repeated my views as to the urgency of taking the step which the general position required, as it was not a question only of the German front and as, even as far as they were concerned, things might turn out otherwise than the General Headquarters still hoped. Also it was essential that we should have a timely assurance that we should not have to face another winter campaign, which would be an absolute impossibility in view of the moral exhaustion of the army and of the civil population. The Emperor William desired a certain time for reflection before coming to a decision.

I found that he was very much impressed by the forces which America had been able to deploy. It was typical of his imaginative power that on this occasion, anticipating future harmonious relations between the European states, he prophesied America's future isolation from European complications, or a kind of converse to the Monroe doctrine.

The conversation, in which other matters, particularly the Polish question, were discussed, was carried on as we walked up and down the garden. Immediately after-

wards the Emperor William went with the Emperor Charles to the station. This was the last meeting between the two allied sovereigns.

In spite of the grave atmosphere at Spa, there was still the resolute determination to continue the war, though every day conditions grew more unfavourable, and it was not apparent that the decline of *moral* was fully realised which was actually affecting the German troops, as has since been admitted, especially after the defeat of the Marne. This may have been due to the reluctance to admit such alarming symptoms or to the desire to limit the dissolution which was setting in by isolating and concealing its individual manifestations ; it did actually make the discussion more difficult, as we had accurate information regarding the position, and therefore had to advance more drastic facts as arguments, not only regarding our own front, but also regarding conditions on the German front, than the Germans were willing to admit. In a word, there was a desire at Spa to take up an attitude which, though very spirited, did not correspond to the critical nature of the position.

The civilian population in Germany appear already at this time to have resigned themselves to a view more in accordance with the actual state of affairs. I had occasion, in attendance on the Emperor Charles, who was paying a visit to the courts of Bavaria and Saxony, to see Dresden on the 27th August, and Munich on the 28th August. In both capitals I ascertained that there was undisguised discontent, profound depression, and an urgent desire for peace, even at the expense of considerable sacrifices, in official circles as well as amongst the general public. I obtained the definite impression, which the Emperor Charles shared as the result of his conversations with the Kings of Saxony and Bavaria,

that the German population in other parts of the empire too, as we were assured, was impatiently waiting for any attempt to achieve peace.

Even before we got back to Vienna, the Emperor Charles had conceived the idea of taking the step which I had proposed, alone, if Germany could not soon make up her mind to take it in conjunction with all the allies.

For us to take this step alone, if necessary, would somewhat alter its character without, however, affecting the underlying principle. We would not then have one side suggesting preliminary peace discussions to the other, but one of the combatant Powers would be making the proposal to all the other states at war, friend and foe alike. That being so, it might be held that Austria-Hungary should issue the same appeal to all concerned, seeking a way of restoring peace to a tortured world.

In the meantime I was pressing Berlin to make haste in coming to a decision. The Emperor Charles wanted us to make our *démarche* by the 3rd September at the latest. The Germans sought to gain time, still hoping for favourable developments in the military position. I gave way as far as I thought was possible without delaying the matter too much.

A new proposal emerged from the internal discussions of the German government which were being carried on in the meantime, and it was commended to me for my acceptance: we were to take the step that I had proposed, not by approaching the enemy Powers direct, but through the mediation of the Queen of Holland, who was to be requested, and as was thought in Berlin, would be disposed, to take the initiative in the matter, and to act as advocate for a non-committal meeting of representatives of all the combatants.

I had always been especially concerned, in all matters affecting the joint interests of the allies, to establish agreement, and as far as possible to fall in with suggestions and with any proposed alterations, so long as the essentials were secured. I proved that this was so on the occasion of our first peace *démarche* of the 12th December 1916, when I gave up what seemed to me a very important condition for the success of the move—the inclusion of definite peace points—in order to make it possible to proceed unanimously.

But in the present case I considered it to be impracticable to realise our intentions in the manner contemplated by Germany. In view of the many sorrows which the war had brought upon the whole world, including the neutrals and especially Holland, Queen Wilhelmina was eminently fitted, as the sovereign of a neutral state and as a woman, to appeal in the name of humanity to the peoples who for four years had been engaged in destroying one another. And yet she would necessarily have failed to secure a hearing. The Entente, who had placed the neutrals under a tyrannical régime without parallel in history, had always made it abundantly clear that it would regard any attempt at mediation made by a neutral state as an unfriendly act, and would treat it accordingly. The neutrals, and especially Holland, who had repeatedly been in danger of being drawn into the war much against her will, were under no illusions as to what this meant. Besides, many heads of governments in neutral states had, in the course of purely academic discussion on the question of the mediation which they would gladly have undertaken, expressed the view that mediation by a neutral would have been admissible only if he were requested to do so by both the combatant parties.

In these circumstances I could not but regard the

suggestion of mediation by the Queen of Holland as quite impracticable, and that is what I stated.

It seemed to me highly improbable that Queen Wilhelmina would entertain such a proposal. But even if she had, in my view it was certain that at the first step she took she would meet the determined opposition of the Entente, and would thereby not only be placed in an unpleasant position herself, but the position of the Netherlands would be made appreciably more difficult. We certainly did not wish to produce such a result. Our attempt would thereby have been brought to nothing, and our mouth would have been closed for ever.

Moreover, there was no practical point in trying to work through a mediator when the suggestion for meeting could be made directly, and all the questions at issue could be dealt with directly and confidentially by the parties concerned.

A fruitful attempt at mediation could scarcely be expected from a quarter, however deeply inspired with love of peace, that was far removed from the great issues affecting the essential existence of the world Powers.

On the 3rd September the German Secretary of State came to Vienna without the Chancellor, who excused his absence on the ground that he was afraid of being excessively fatigued by the journey.

The discussions on the 4th and 5th were concerned with the intended peace move as well as with Polish affairs. The result was very poor. The arguments produced by the Secretary of State regarding the German proposal for mediation by the Queen of Holland were not such as could dissipate the misgiving which I have just mentioned, and which I explained to him in detail. Intervention by a neutral state, in this case, was not merely superfluous, since it was not a question of mediation but of a preliminary discussion to throw light on the situation—in view of the well-known attitude of the

Entente it was not even admissible, and even under the most favourable conditions would involve considerable loss of time, owing to the steps that would have to be taken to bring it about.

Herr von Hintze undertook to explain my point of view to Berlin. His view of the military situation was no more rosy than mine, and he never found it difficult to resist the force of my contention that if the step that we were contemplating were to have any meaning, we ought to take it without delay. He only wanted to wait for a few days until the German army had taken up its position on the Hindenburg line.

The Emperor Charles, too, personally made it quite clear to the Secretary of State that there could be no question of endeavouring to secure any mediation.

In the meantime the German troops completed their retreat, and Field-Marshal von Hindenburg also declared in favour of a peace move, though only through neutral mediation.

In the circumstances any delay would have been equivalent to renouncing the whole project, to which my sense of responsibility made me feel bound to adhere. The only alternative would be an early capitulation.

The 12th and then the 14th September was fixed for taking the step ; it was eventually taken by Austria-Hungary alone, since Germany refused to be associated with it. I have never really understood the reason for this obstinate refusal, as my misgivings regarding neutral intervention could not be gainsaid, and indeed a member of the German government, the Vice-Chancellor von Payer, made a speech at Stuttgart on the 12th September, only two days before my step was taken, which, while expressing every confidence in the situation, outlined a fairly extensive peace programme, though, it is true, it was not likely to meet with any very friendly reception from our enemies.

CHAPTER XXI

THE NOTE OF THE 14TH SEPTEMBER 1918

MY Note of the 14th September was addressed to all the combatants. It was based upon such considerations as might at that time still count. It recalled our peace offer of the 12th September 1916, and drew attention to the fact that the question of peace had not ceased to be a subject of world discussion since. I pointed out that in turn almost all the combatant states had kept mentioning the conditions necessary for peace. Without undue optimism the fact emerged that divergence between the views of each side as to the basis of the future regulation of the relations between the states had grown much less, at any rate in principle, and that certain war aims were thrust less prominently into the foreground. A growth of the desire for peace and understanding might be assumed to have taken place amongst wide sections of the population in both capitals. I pointed out that there were some among the enemy statesmen too who had not always expressed their wish to annihilate us. Thus Balfour recognised in a speech in parliament in the autumn of 1917 that Austria-Hungary must settle her internal problems herself and that nobody could impose a constitution upon Germany from outside. Lloyd George had stated at the beginning of 1918 that it was not one of the war aims of the Entente to partition Austria-Hungary, to rob the Ottoman empire of its Turkish provinces, or to reform Germany internally.

My Note explained why the method of ministerial speeches adopted up to the present, though encouraging discussion within each country, had not promoted discussions between the different states, as the speakers had held forth in a series of monologues, ignoring each other.

I arrived at my conclusion as to the practicability of an immediate preliminary discussion in order to examine whether the basis of peace negotiations could

be created by laying down general principles for future agreement and applying them to the individual questions at issue. In this way mountains of anxious misunderstandings could be cleared away.

I concluded with my proposal to the governments of all states taking part in the war to meet somewhere in a neutral country, for the purpose of a confidential and non-committal discussion regarding the basic principles upon which peace should be concluded.

The Note had no success. It was received with acclamation by the Austro-Hungarian press, which absolutely expressed public sentiment. Berlin grumbled somewhat, but reconciled herself to what had happened, and officially concurred in my proposal.

The enemy states turned the proposal down. A statement of Reuter's ostensibly went into the matter, and laid down that complete reparation in Belgium and Serbia must be a preliminary condition of any peace discussion. Soon after my Note had been received, Balfour made a statement that he did not expect the proposed discussion to yield any results. The British minister made his points with the use of stereotyped catchwords, and under the influence of the general passion of hatred. They contained a series of hasty conclusions as to the attitude of the Central Powers on the concrete peace problems, which he might have avoided if he had accepted my proposal to arrange a discussion.

The first official reply came from America. Lansing, the Secretary of State, refused to consider the idea of a preliminary conference, and emphasised his adherence to the points laid down by Wilson. This reply was obviously sent in speedily, in order to anticipate the attitude taken up by the Entente Powers. It was not desirable that the wishes of Britain or France should place

obstacles in the path for the new order of things that Wilson was still convinced that he could inaugurate, in view of the dominating position that he held as the decisive factor in the war.

It was not possible to ascertain the effect upon pacifist circles in the Entente. A severe censorship, and the brusque speeches of Balfour and Clemenceau, killed friendly influences.

The Note of the 14th September was at that time the only thing that could still be attempted. Though it did not achieve its object, it cleared up the position. The Entente refused the idea of a peace by understanding, which, in its view, would merely have been a paper peace in which "right would be trampled under foot and justice would be scorned."

We see to-day what play the "dictated peace" of the Entente has made of right and justice and the freedom of peoples!

An indirect result of my Note was Wilson's speech of the 27th September 1918. This was no reply to Austria-Hungary's step, nor did it in any way accept the suggestion of a discussion of peace. On the contrary, it explained how "peace drives" could be neutralised and silenced. "The world does not want terms," he said. "It wishes the final triumph of justice and fair dealing." We have learned how these principles have been applied.

Wilson's Twenty-two Points on the 8th January, 12th February, and 4th July 1918, which he himself described as his peace programme, were not only accepted absolutely by his allies, but were welcomed with the most emphatic agreement and with pæans of praise for him who was then the indispensable saviour in distress.

In his speech of the 27th December 1918, which was specially made to assist a "Liberty Loan," he dealt

with five new points—a kind of epilogue to his earlier programme.

President Wilson opened his speech with the remark that the war had “positive and well-defined objects which no statesman or assembly had created.” He obviously believed that he had clearly recognised them and saw in them “the common will of mankind” which was to be realised by the statesmen. He goes on to say that “the common will of mankind has been substituted for the particular purposes of individual States.”

Though the speech did not fail to contain a powerful attack upon Germany, whose government had “destroyed Russia and deceived Rumania,” in general the speech was directed to a businesslike consideration of the conditions of peace and expressly committed Wilson to the following new points, regarding which he was “definitely able to state that they represented the views of his government as to their own duty with regard to peace.”

Introduced in this way, the five points of the speech might confidently be regarded as the basis upon which Wilson at any rate would deal with us at any time when the war came to an end, since any future changes in the military situation could not affect the “aims of mankind.”

The five points laid down :

1. Impartial justice, that knows no favourites and knows no standard but the equal rights of the several peoples concerned.

2. The exclusion of any special or separate interest of any single individual nation or any group of nations, which is not consistent with the common interest of all.

3. No leagues or alliances or special covenants and understandings within the general and common family of the League of Nations.

4. No special selfish economic combinations within

the League, and no employment of any form of economic boycott.

5. All international agreements and treaties of every kind must be made known in their entirety to the rest of the world.

In these points and in the general statement that he made at the same time, Wilson appeared to say to the Quadruple Alliance: "You are conquered; resign yourselves to your fate. That which awaits you is not vengeance, but the duty of reparation and reception into the league of all peoples as equals amongst equals." It was like an invitation to meet upon the broad humanitarian grounds of the Fourteen Points, which were right and wise not because Wilson had laid them down, but because they represented the great truth taught by the evolution of civilised people and were the result of driving instincts, apart from which the people of the world would not have endured a conquest involving such sacrifices on both sides, which were fighting for the same objects under different names and under different flags. The profound lesson of Wilson's points consisted in preventing humanity from continuing to allow itself to be tortured in the swings of the pendulum between victory and revenge and in leading it to the highest state of relations between the states.

He had made a fundamental error in his judgment of the sentiments of both his allies and opponents.

CHAPTER XXII

NEARING THE END

AFTER the failure of our attempt of the 14th September, the future fate of Austria-Hungary and of Germany was dependent only upon two factors: the enemy's superiority, which was making itself felt more keenly every day, and conditions at home, which had reached a high state of ferment. In regard to the former we were powerless; the latter might be dealt with by radical measures, though these would probably be too late.

The Austro-Hungarian front might conceivably be held to the end of the year. Shortage of munitions, provisions, and clothing made it quite impossible to last out another winter.

Our general position made an early solution most urgent. As the Emperor Charles too clearly appreciated the situation, I succeeded in persuading him to make up his mind to take a decisive step not later than the middle of October to terminate the war, and also to cause both governments of the monarchy without delay to take all such measures at home as the position rendered necessary.

We wished Germany by the same date to fall in with our point of view, and to call her attention to the fact that certain much-attacked internal conditions in Germany, which were in the forefront of the discussion and notoriously constituted an obstacle to peace, required no less urgently to be settled.

Our endeavours in this direction, and the dark picture of conditions on the German front which was rapidly being disclosed, caused the decisions of the two allies to approximate more closely to one another. On the 28th September, after an exhaustive discussion with our ambassador, Prince Hohenlohe, the Secretary of State von Hintze went to Spa, and on the 30th September Count Wedel informed me that Germany was willing to

offer peace on the basis of President Wilson's Fourteen Points.

These events were already taking place against the background of Bulgaria's collapse. The power of resistance of the whole front of the Quadruple Allies seemed to be immediately threatened, now that it had given way at the point of least resistance.

The symptoms of exhaustion had appeared in a much more acute form on the Bulgarian front than in the west. Wearied after the Balkan wars, Bulgaria was unable to sustain to the end the efforts demanded by the new war. Though she received generous support from her allies, this could not be given to the extent which was necessary, and with a strongly reduced man-power, Bulgaria was not equal to continuing her resistance to the troops of the Salonica armies, who were constantly being reinforced and reorganised. Moreover, the unsatisfactory developments in her diplomacy, which were turned to ample account in the field by the opponents of Radoslavoff, exerted the worst possible influence upon the spirit of the troops. The Bulgarian soldier knew that he had reconquered the Dobrudscha, and now he heard that German claims and Turkish protests were to contest his possession of it, and besides this, territory on the Maritza which had become Bulgarian was to be handed back to Turkey. He no longer knew for what he should continue to fight. After six years of war, the urge to return to the plough became irresistible, all the more so since inadequate rations and the severe shortage of clothing were undermining the patience and the strength of the troops. These conditions had been well known to the allies since August. They contemplated them with much embarrassment. The Bulgarian generals knew that their men would no longer resist an energetic attack. They begged for reinforcements and for clothes. Something was done for them, but it

was inadequate and too late. Two army corps were on the way to Bulgaria. The allied general staffs felt that they could not spare any more men from their front.

Fate took its course. When the Balkan army with the newly enrolled Greek troops developed a strong offensive, the Bulgarian troops fled. A terrible experience for the veteran army accustomed to victory, it was a shattering blow, not only to the weakening *moral* of the other armies in the field, but also to the *moral* of the people at home.

On the 25th September Bulgaria asked for peace—the very day on which the efforts of Germany and Austria-Hungary had succeeded in eliminating the Turko-Bulgarian differences, which had been the principal stumbling-block causing the rot in the *moral* of the Bulgarian army.

In dealing with the military situation, the Central Powers took steps to establish a new shortened front against the advance of the Entente troops through Serbia. In this they were not successful, as the following days soon shewed. Nothing could now check the unrestrained development of events within the monarchy and Germany, which now took their headlong course, under the influence of a kind of panic that everything had been lost.

On the 27th September a Crown Council was held at Vienna at which it was decided to establish the new southern front to protect our frontiers, and then immediately to make overtures for peace. The burning internal problems which were now scarcely under control were then exhaustively discussed with the serious desire to deal with them, the only regrettable thing being that this desire had not manifested itself earlier. We were anxious to take action for two reasons. We wanted, if possible, to get under control the Separatist tendencies which were becoming more and more apparent, especially

in the Czech and Southern Slav districts ; and we also wanted to introduce our peace offer, which was based on Wilson's Fourteen Points, with the support of the moral prestige of having already effected an understanding between the various peoples of the monarchy.

The Austrian Prime Minister, Freiherr von Hussarek, developed a programme of reform at home. His Hungarian colleague, Dr. Wekerle, held out the prospect of a new settlement with Croatia. I pointed out the desperate urgency of the decision, which had to be taken at the eleventh hour, in the fate of both states in the monarchy.

In view of the actual circumstances, the Bosnia-Herzegovinian question seemed to be one of the most urgent. Owing to the inability of the two states to come to an agreement regarding Bosnia-Herzegovina's actual position, these countries were still constitutionally hanging in the air, although they had sealed with their blood their adherence to the monarchy. This state of affairs could not be allowed to continue ; indeed it was not possible to settle Croatian affairs without dealing with Bosnia-Herzegovina. Croatia-Slavonia laid claim to Bosnia-Herzegovina no less than to Dalmatia. Since Hungary, as I have already mentioned, was inclined to substantiate historical claims on the ground of the ancient association of the kingdom of Bosnia with the countries of St. Stephen's Crown, and Austria seemed to have similar rights as a co-heir, it was obvious in the circumstances that an agreement between Austria and Hungary would have to be arrived at, but that no further solution could be achieved without the concurrence of the countries themselves.

The Crown Council did not fail to take note of the necessity which I had urged of immediately reassuring the population of Bosnia-Herzegovina that their fate would not be decided without their being consulted.

In order to provide the governments of the two states with a powerful inducement for taking in hand the measures of reform which had become impossible of further postponement, it was decided to give Bosnia-Herzegovina an opportunity of expressing her wishes as to whether she desired union with the Croat-Slovene-Dalmatian kingdom or not. It was reserved for the two governments to settle by agreement the form in which it was to be done. It did not prove possible to produce agreement on this point. The paralysis of will in leading quarters could not be overcome. Since the failure of the Croat-Slovene government the door was opened wide in Bosnia-Herzegovina to the Trumbic-Korocec Southern Slovene schemes. Through Wilson's reply to our peace offer, Bosnia-Herzegovina became a portion of the kingdom of Yugo-Slavia.

For the internal structure of the monarchy this meant the beginning of the collapse, unless the war could immediately be brought to an end. Austria and Hungary seemed to be shaken by an acute fever. There was no sign of firm leadership anywhere. Policy in the two states had become a thing of fits and starts, which still tried to come to terms with the progressive, centrifugal tendencies.

In this chaos, which I was unable to subdue, there was only one thing for me to do, and that was to bring about peace at any price and by any means. I entered into active discussion with Berlin, which, as I have already mentioned, had on the 30th September declared its readiness to make peace overtures to Wilson on the basis of his Fourteen Points.

The necessary preliminary stages, such as securing the agreement of those of responsible quarters with which I was still in touch, would certainly have taken some days, had it not been for the sudden collapse of the

German front. On the 2nd October the German High Command declared that the enemy must immediately be asked for an armistice for the purpose of entering into peace negotiations. I suggested a two-days delay to enable Austria-Hungary and Germany to take this step simultaneously. This would also enable Germany to effect the change of government at Berlin which had become inevitable, and to send in her offer through the new Chancellor, Prince Max of Baden. I employed this interval in securing the agreement of both governments at a joint ministerial conference on the 2nd October to the step under contemplation, and on the 3rd October in enlightening leading politicians of Austria and Hungary as to the hopelessness of the situation and its immediate requirements.

Groups of Austrian members of the Upper and Lower House came to see me, as well as the leaders of the Hungarian parliamentary parties, who had been asked to come to Vienna. The fact was fully appreciated that the war could not be continued, and that our best hope of a tolerable peace lay in clinging to Wilson's Fourteen Points, upon which the future fellowship of the peoples could be based, and to which the President was most solemnly committed, while they had also received the express approval of the Entente Powers.

On the night of the 4th October our request for an armistice and our offer to negotiate peace terms were sent to Wilson. They were sent to him because he was obviously the appropriate person, now that the time had come to apply his own principles with power and authority in all directions. Of course we had no absolute guarantee that he would do so, but since the 8th January, when the Fourteen Points were enunciated, they had found more supporters among the Central Powers than with the Entente. It is true that Clemenceau had not yet made his remark about Wilson's *noble candeur*, but it had

become obvious that the deference shown by the Western European Powers to Wilson's proposals had been merely superficial, occasioned by the decisive importance of their American allies, and that in reality we were up against two entirely different peace programmes of our enemies, and would have to reckon with the moment when Wilson would be no longer the only decisive factor.

Nevertheless, though Wilson's points were but straws, we had to catch at them and to try to make as much capital as possible of Wilson's moral obligation, as there was no other hope left to us, and this was the only way in which we could avoid sheer capitulation.

We were at least justified in expecting that Wilson, while logically trying to carry out his ideas, would inevitably be forced to advocate our right to existence. He required us to carry out certain reforms. In order to do so it was necessary that we should continue to exist.

In this matter, too, we met with bitter disappointment.

Now followed a period of acute suspense. The first indication of what was to happen was Lansing's words to the Swedish ambassador at Washington on receiving our Note: "*La réponse sera peu encourageante.*"

Wilson's Reply to Germany was received on the 9th October.

The immediate evacuation of France and Belgium was demanded as a preliminary condition for the armistice. The reply to Austria-Hungary was to follow later. On the 11th October Germany accepted Wilson's conditions in agreement with us.

During the days before Wilson's reply to Austria-Hungary was received, the last hurried attempts were made to check the process of dissolution at home, which was being hastened by our patent incapacity to continue to fight.

The cohesion of the various parts of Austria was

giving way. To those who still wished the states to be held together, federalism appeared to be the only salvation. Hungary, which had been roused to great excitement by the developments of Austria, began to clamour loudly for personal union. The conditions on which the dualism of 1867 was based, appeared to be in question through the danger to the unity of the Austrian state, and from all the party camps of Hungary there came the demand that Hungary must take up her stand upon the Pragmatic Sanction.

In both states of the monarchy all those problems with which governments had been concerned during the previous century, and which had remained unsolved because of the excessive number of the questions raised, or because of the *laissez-faire* attitude of the various governments, suddenly became intensely actual. For both governments the situation, which was hopelessly confused, had got out of hand. Wekerle's and Hussarek's cabinets sent in their resignations on the 11th October. Both governments, however, were entrusted with the further conduct of affairs after a short, unsuccessful attempt in Hungary had been made to clear up the situation through the mission of Návay as being a *homo regius*.

While the hopes and fears of all political circles, and indeed of the whole population of the monarchy, were just keyed-up to the highest point, the delegations met in Vienna on the 15th October. One obstacle after another, generally arising out of parliamentary conditions in Austria, had prevented this meeting, which it had been intended to hold for so long, from taking place, until it was finally fixed for the middle of October.

Although the fate of Austria-Hungary was in those days more or less in the balance, and we could only get some idea as to how matters would develop when we

received Wilson's reply to our offer, there was no occasion for the further delay in the meeting of the delegations. Indeed, in my opinion it would be a source of much-needed strength to the joint government if, when taking its most serious decision, it were in touch with those bodies to which it was immediately responsible.

But it was an exceptionally awkward task for me to make the traditional statement on foreign affairs at the opening session, giving such information as was required to deal adequately with the situation, while maintaining the reserve which was necessary at the time.

It was not possible to give free expression to the deep concern which I felt, or to point out all the indications of the attack that was developing against the structure of the monarchy. Neither would it have been admissible to have said anything more regarding the lowered defensive powers of the monarchy than the enemy already knew. Though we might feel sick at heart, it was up to us as long as we were still unbeaten to keep up appearances, to rally all our remaining courage and belief in the future, and to emphasise the confidence which we justly felt that Wilson, who was so eagerly engaged in demonstrating to himself and to the world the paths that led to lasting peace, would not forget to be true to himself and to all the people at war, now that one of the combatant parties was holding out its hand to him.

For this reason it would not have been right for me to say anything calculated to disturb the course of Wilson's deliberations before he gave his answer, to prejudice him against Austria-Hungary.

I candidly admit that my statement of the position thus gave a suggestion of optimism, though it went against the grain with me, and was belied by the events of the next few days. But on the 15th October I was

still justified in speaking as I did, and it was my duty to do so, because at such a critical time a note of alarm might have let loose the panic which was already threatening.

My statement was received coolly, though without opposition, by both delegations. I could not expect anything else, for the general feeling amongst those bodies was one of constraint and oppression: they were relying on last hopes more than on any real confidence; and a reserved statement could not produce that confidence which I myself did not feel. The sole object of my words was to show that our standpoint was justified to prevent things from going wrong before the decisive moment. They were directed indeed almost more to the outside world than to the delegates, who were entirely subject to the overmastering impressions of the ferment at home. The Hungarian delegation adjourned after hearing my statement, and a short but very sharp passage of words took place between Michael Károlyi and Stephan Tisza.

It never met again. The Austrian delegation began a debate on my statement on the 17th October, but the debate was not destined to be continued.

After our peace move of the 4th October, my *exposé* could merely hold out the prospect "that we should succeed within an appreciable time in bringing hostilities to an end on all fronts, and in entering into negotiations regarding the conclusion of a general, lasting, and just peace." Then followed a reminder of the fact that "Austria-Hungary's policy for the last two years had steadfastly and consistently pursued the object of winning for the sorely tried peoples of the monarchy an honourable peace by understanding which should bring her, after all her heavy sacrifices, into the path of secure development and undisturbed peaceful work." I also allowed myself to indicate that in spite of everything,

the idea of peace had come nearer realisation, and to point out, with reference to the world situation, "that on all sides the way had been prepared for the realisation that the war must be brought to an early end." We, and perhaps several of our opponents, had arrived at the conviction during the changing fortunes of the world war that "this struggle" was "not necessarily to be decided by the sword," which would entail incalculable further sacrifices, and "our group of Powers had therefore recently decided very soon to take steps with the object of realising the idea of a peace by understanding, which we had always had in mind." Our intentions were carried out in the Note of the 4th October. The lamentable course of events in Bulgaria did not in any way affect this Note, but hastened its despatch, since the elimination of Bulgaria compelled that country's allies to build up a new front in the south-east which would require additional forces. "This new development had made it apparent that we could no longer expect a decisive success in the field, but that our enemies could not reckon upon breaking down our defence, so that there was no object in any further shedding of blood."

My *exposé* continued with an appeal to President Wilson, especially to his remarks of the 27th September, which I felt I might regard as partly having reference to my suggestion of the 14th September. It is perhaps not redundant to recapitulate these remarks here, in the light of what has occurred since.

"Many expressions of opinion abroad, prompted by my Note of the 14th September of this year, have shewn on closer examination that at a not too distant future there should be possibilities for opening up peace discussions, an assumption which is confirmed by President Wilson's statement of the 27th September. With the profound sense of the gravity of the matter which char-

acterises all his public statements, he has in his speech again taken up the thread of peace discussions which had appeared to have been broken. The views of the President of the United States regarding the solution of the world problems which were pressing for settlement have not failed to be permeated with the spirit of true humanity, even since he has entered the ranks of our enemies and has laid down many principles directed against us. The public statements therefore of Mr. Wilson have never failed to impress us, nor have we ever failed to accept them in principle.

“The President of the United States, who is aiming at a point of view superior to party, spoke on the 27th September of precisely defined war aims, which, to quote his words, no statesman and no parliament has thought out ; he said that nationalistic aims had fallen more and more into the background, and that the common aims of an enlightened humanity had taken their place. We fully understand this view of the present world position. The changes which have taken place during the war in the importance attached to many of the matters in dispute, which were outstanding before the war and proceeded from the conflict of interest between the individual states and peoples, have produced amongst us, too, a growing inclination to suppress the standpoint of mere interest, and to solve any existing subjects of dispute in the light of a higher equalising justice. Purified by the heavy sufferings which this war has inflicted upon almost all humanity, the vast majority of peoples will gladly concur in a development of their future relations according to such principles. In this conviction we have adopted the principles formulated by Mr. Wilson, which to a large extent were already quite definitely incorporated in our peace programme. Properly understood and practically applied, these principles, whose aim it is to realise impartiality and justice, should also

exercise a beneficial influence upon the settlement of the internal relations of the two states of the monarchy with which we are now engaged. If the problems which the monarchy has to deal with at home, and which, though by no means new, have blossomed to full actuality in the forcing-house atmosphere of the war, are tackled and dealt with in this spirit, it will lead to the realisation of the wish, which the President of the United States shares with us, that the peoples of Austria-Hungary shall have their place protected and assured."

I was certainly justified at the time in seeking to associate ourselves with a powerful quarter which had enunciated principles which would be workable in the new conditions of the future, and which was not dominated and blinded by the desire to annihilate us. Though Wilson might prove unfaithful to his principles, which after all were not his alone, they would nevertheless remain the right principles. We had to accept them, for they will inevitably assert themselves ultimately, although, now they have been denied, perhaps not before further trials and sufferings. The future progress of the nations can be accomplished only in harmony with those principles, and not through the long swings of the pendulum of the periods of historical strife which we have known in the past, and which have always ended with a *væ victis*. Humanity, whose best spirits have descried and pointed out more hopeful perspectives, will have no more of them.

I was able in my *exposé* to concede the preliminary condition which Wilson had stipulated in his first reply to Germany, but which expressly referred to the Central Powers generally. The President had stated that he would not feel justified in recommending his allies to accept an armistice as long as the armies of the Central Powers were still upon their soil. I said to the delegations: "Germany and ourselves have definitely

agreed to the evacuation. It is only a matter of taking the steps necessary from the technical point of view."

In my *exposé* I also expressed approval of the League of Nations, that is of a league of nations as conceived by the passionate longings of the nations at war, and such as President Wilson had proclaimed with universal approval.

"The creation of the League of Nations is the necessary condition for the inauguration of a peace of impartial justice such as President Wilson and ourselves are aiming at. Such a league of nations will, in accordance with the general view prevailing, constitute the backbone of the world order, in accordance with which the relations of the individual states to one another will have to be relegated. When it is set up, the policy of the balance of power which rests upon force will come to an end. Its place will be taken by a uniform organisation of states which will voluntarily place themselves under an international law framed by themselves, the sanction of which will reside in a power of action superior to the individual states. It will be the duty of this organisation to secure the members of the league in their political independence, their territorial integrity, and their legal equality, and to protect them against such combinations as might damage their economic interests. The internal courts of justice, which will have to decide questions of dispute between members of the league, will constitute an integral part of the agreements to be concluded for this purpose. As we have repeatedly declared, we are prepared to enter a league of nations which provides an absolute guarantee that interests will be impartially protected. The constitution of such a league will be the necessary preliminary for the reduction of armaments and for the regulation of the freedom of the seas—objects which for a long time have formed part of our peace programme. By the creation of a league of nations as

joint protector of the individual states, the object of their own protective measures and armaments will disappear ; although this of course will not happen until the league has taken over the function of protecting the individual states."

Our support for a union of nations on these lines could not be held to apply to the association for mutual protection of interests which the Supreme Council of Paris has created ; or rather, has aimed at creating, for to secure the fruits of victory will be one of the hardest problems that this one-sided league will have to deal with, if it is to preserve harmony between its members.

My statement had reference to a league of nations which, according to Wilson's proposal, should be open to all states on an equal basis, and should be included in the peace negotiations themselves, which should mean that former enemy states should be members of it. It is, in fact, a close association under the leadership of the "Great Powers," the other states who have been admitted to the League of Nations at the same time thereby being reduced to the position of "minor Powers," thus destroying the very idea of the league, while the conquered peoples are left outside its closed doors to wait for admission.

A league of nations, as a war-weary world understood it, will come, not as a reward or a penalty, but by a free decision of all the peoples who wish to join it. A limited league of nations is a self-contradictory term. At best it is a defensive or offensive alliance of the bad old kind. The fact that the victorious Powers, Britain, France, and the United States, as speedily as possible entered into an alliance of mutual guarantees, which should have been out of the question, or at any rate superfluous in a league of nations, gives a fairly clear indication as to the nature of the league which the Entente has created.

I concluded my *exposé* with a final, desperate appeal to the peoples of the monarchy "to place their future upon new and lasting foundations, through patient endeavour, patriotic reflection in a spirit of reconciliation, and self-sacrifice, to forget the past and to recognise the essential needs of the time, realising that its dangers could be eliminated only by the spirit of justice and conciliation."

In speaking these words I was giving expression to my conviction that the continuation of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy must be regarded as being indispensable to the future existence of its peoples, however elastically it might have to be adapted to the needs of the time, these peoples having been brought together not by chance but by their essential needs. At that moment the structure of the monarchy was cracking in all its joints.

The delegates listened gloomily, and, like the two governments, could only think of the violent shocks under which the ancient structure was quivering.

On the very next day, the 16th October, Freiherr von Hussarek and Dr. Wekerle carried out the government measures which represented the final attempt to get abreast of internal movements in Austria-Hungary, and by the most extensive concessions to get a certain control of the situation. But the remedy only served to increase the evil, for the reins had slipped from the hands of the governments.

The Austrian manifesto of the 16th October, which declared Austria to be a federal state, was and often still is regarded as the cause or the occasion of the dissolution of Austria. In my opinion, this view exaggerates its significance. The manifesto made a strong impression, and one that was everywhere unfavourable, because it brought into sharp relief a situation which had not yet been realised by the general public. But the manifesto,

the recourse of a helpless government, was not conceived as an advance, but as a precaution. At that moment the separatist movement in Bohemia had thrown off all disguise, and the Slovene country had succumbed absolutely to Southern Slav sedition. That being the position, the Austrian government hastily had recourse to the measure whereby it hoped, through recognition of the independence of the Austrian peoples which was now inevitable, to preserve in the form of a federal state the idea of Austrian unity.

The effect even of the best-intentioned measures at highly critical periods cannot be calculated in advance. The effect of the manifesto was catastrophic. The flood-gates were opened.

The effects were intensified by the army command of the 17th October. It expressed appreciation of the loyalty and devotion of the troops, and informed them that the country for whose existence they had fought and suffered would be split up into national states. This naturally caused the greatest consternation at the front, where national associations were scattered throughout almost all sections of troops, while the men's nerves were already severely tried through privations which they had undergone.

The effect of events in Austria was to produce in Hungary a flight from the dualism almost amounting to a panic, in which all parties and the government too joined. In his speech to the Hungarian Lower House on the 16th October, the Prime Minister, Dr. Wekerle, announced as his programme pure personal union, as with the federalising of Austria a principal condition of the dualism, a unified Austria, had disappeared. Even Tisza recommended that the two states of the monarchy, who after all had been through the war together, should be separately represented at the peace negotiations.

On top of all this came the cry that Hungarian troops should be recalled to protect the home frontiers. The armies of the Entente were advancing through Serbia, and were again carrying that country with them. Rumania, too, was preparing to take full advantage of the situation created by our suing for peace. The fear of seeing Hungarian territory flooded by the enemy outweighed all other considerations, and spread with amazing speed to the front, so that it was exceedingly difficult to keep the troops there.

It became more and more evident in this feverishly excited atmosphere that the Hungarian politicians were no more in control of the situation than their Austrian colleagues. All claims that had ever been put forward in the monarchy became vocal, and it seemed as though the confusion were such that anything might be possible. The governments were at a complete loss how to act. They wanted to exert a moderating influence, but they had lost their hold on events. It was obvious that other forces were at work, directed by the one recognisable mass instinct to get away from the whole existing order of things and to seek refuge in what was new and unknown.

On the 20th October Wilson's Reply to our offer of an armistice burst like a bomb upon the final attempts of the Austrian and Hungarian governments to get control of the disruptive forces. The framework of the monarchy, which for years had been the object of systematic attacks by our enemies' propaganda, was rent asunder in a moment. Wilson had not taken any active part in this underground work. Far from it. Even after the Entente Powers, in replying on the 15th January 1917 to his Peace Note of the 18th December 1916, in which he stood out for the "territorial integrity of the nations involved in the war," had laid down the

liberation of all the nationalities of Austria-Hungary from "foreign domination" as one of their war aims, the President spoke in his Message to the Senate of a "peace without victory," that is to say a peace by understanding, and thus by implication made the annihilation of one of the combatants out of the question. The tenth of the Fourteen Points of 8th January 1918 requires the development of self-government amongst the peoples of Austria-Hungary, that is to say, an acceleration and extension of what was already being effected, in harmony with the essential nature of the monarchy and its internal requirements.

And now, in a Reply which had no saving grace in any other point, Wilson surprised us by a formal withdrawal of that one of his Fourteen Points which affected us most closely, and but for whose guarantee we should have had no occasion for addressing our request for an armistice to him. What reason did he give for this change of attitude? It is important to bear the reason in mind, and to realise its implications, which gave rise to a position which was not merely fatal to the monarchy, but entirely mistaken and untenable.

President Wilson states in his Reply that "he is unable at present to entertain proposals from the Austro-Hungarian government, because certain events of the greatest importance, which have occurred since his statement of the 8th January, have necessarily changed the attitude and the duty of the government of the United States of America."

What were these events that they were of such far-reaching importance?

Wilson quotes his tenth Point, and then adds: "Since that sentence was written and uttered to the Congress of the United States, the government of the United States has recognised that a state of belligerency exists between the Czecho-Slovaks and the German and Austro-

Hungarian Empires and that the Czecho-Slovak National Council is a *de facto* belligerent government clothed with proper authority to direct the military and political affairs of the Czecho-Slovaks. It has also recognised in the fullest manner the justice of the nationalistic aspirations of the Jugo-Slavs for freedom. The President is, therefore, no longer at liberty to accept the mere 'autonomy' of these peoples as a basis of peace, but is obliged to insist that they, and not he, shall be the judges of what action on the part of the Austro-Hungarian government will satisfy their aspirations and their conception of their rights and destiny as members of the family of nations."

I had no opportunity to reply to this answer, because I resigned office four days later. But every word of it provoked contradiction. If occasion had arisen, I would not have spared my comments, and I should like here to bring out the essential factors which characterised Wilson's new attitude, and the effects of which still operate in the confusion which they have produced.

As an individual nation the Czecho-Slovaks are a Czechish invention (in which it is true that certain Slovak personalities had a share) recognised by the Entente for their own purposes without much examination. The Slovak people and their present political leaders never gave anyone the right to declare on their behalf that they belonged to the Czechs. In spite of all eloquent phrases about the right to self-determination, they have never been consulted on the point. That should surely have been done before tearing a people from an association with which they had been identified for a thousand years, and with which all their property rights and economic interests are bound up. Surely those who asserted that the wishes of the Slovaks were directed towards separation from Hungary and union with the

Czechs should have insisted upon giving the Slovaks an opportunity of expressing themselves on the point. In any case Wilson and the Entente, who were entirely uninformed as to the actual conditions, should not have failed to apply their principles on this occasion, but should have arranged a plebiscite.

They should have been led to approach this question cautiously by the well-known fact that the conduct of the Slovak troops during the war was entirely different from that of the Czechs. The former always fought as loyal sons of Hungary with exemplary courage and devotion, and never went over to the enemy. This surely is an indication of the will of a nation.

In spite of any official recognition, this fact shews how utterly unjustifiable was the assertion that a state of war existed between the Czecho-Slovaks, that is also the Slovaks, and Austria-Hungary.

If there was a state of war between us and the Czechs on the 18th October, this must also have been the case on the 8th January when Wilson announced his Fourteen Points, as there had been no essential change in the attitude of the Czechs in the meantime, and they never did anything resembling a declaration of war, nor had they withdrawn from the political life of Austria. On the 23rd October, that is five days after Wilson's Reply, two Czech delegates were still active members of the Delegation Committee for Foreign Affairs, which would hardly have been possible if they had been aware that they were at war with Austria-Hungary.

Wilson's reply was actuated by his desire to free himself from Point Ten; by an artificial construction he denied the basis for negotiations, which he had selected and we had confidently accepted.

The same applies to his attitude to the question of Southern Slavonia. Wilson recognises the Southern Slav aspirations towards freedom. Then he declares in

one and the same sentence : (1) that the mere autonomy of these peoples cannot be accepted as the basis for peace, and (2) that he is not in a position to estimate the extent of the concession which Austria-Hungary should make in order to satisfy these peoples. Herein he was inconsistent, for if he did not regard himself as called upon to judge the degree of freedom which the Southern Slav peoples had a right to claim, there was no reason why such an elastic idea as autonomy should prove an obstacle to peace, and the application of the principle of self-determination so convincingly advanced by him and accepted by us, might have solved national problems in a more satisfactory manner than a tendentious declaration which must necessarily intimidate some, and inflame the lust for conquest in others.

I should also have pointed out that after we had laid down our arms on the basis of the Fourteen Points and this basis had been expressly accepted by the Entente Powers, and according to Wilson's own words it would be the duty of the Peace Conference merely to "discuss the details of their application," our enemies were no longer free to deal with us as they pleased, and that the peace conditions must be consistent with President Wilson's messages containing the Fourteen Points, which had been accepted by all sides.

At the Peace Conference, where, according to Keynes, the author of that honest book *The Economic Consequences of the War*, who himself took part in the labour of the conference, levity, blindness, and insolence ruled the day, these obligations were ignored.

The work done there is described by Keynes as follows : "The wise and magnanimous programme [Wilson's] for the world had . . . become part of a solemn contract to which all the Great Powers of the world had put their signature. But it was lost nevertheless in the morass of Paris" (page 58).

“ A war ostensibly waged in defence of the sanctity of international engagements ended in a definite breach of one of the most sacred possible of such engagements on the part of the victorious champions of these ideals ” (page 134).

At the last joint ministerial conference, which was held on the 21st October, I gave a rough draft of the Reply which I intended to send to the American government, and which, though it would not have altered the course of affairs in any way, would have put certain mistaken conceptions in the proper light.

The breath of dissolution was already upon this conference. Dr. Wekerle brought up his draft bill dealing with the personal union, the acceptance of which would have had an immediate effect upon joint affairs, and therefore also upon the question of a joint conclusion of peace, since, according to the Hungarian scheme, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was immediately to be split up.

In order to ensure the agreement of the parliamentary parties to my reply, I had a confidential discussion on the 23rd October with the Austrian Foreign Affairs Committee of the delegation, and fixed a meeting with the leading Hungarian politicians for the 24th October.

The conference with the Austrian Committee resulted in a unanimous attitude to the position. The Czech delegates, Dr. Stransky and Dr. Urdal, took up a separate position. They had taken part in the discussion, subject to the reservation that they did not recognise the delegation as legally constituted. The Ukrainian delegate Wassilko also differed from us.

I naturally failed to come to any agreement with the Czech delegates regarding the idea of the Czecho-Slovak nation. They supported their arguments as usual by mentioning Slovak politicians and literary men who had

expressed themselves in favour of the union of the two countries. I reminded them that the Slovak people had never had nor sought an opportunity for expressing their desire for such a union. The Slovak members in the Hungarian parliament have constantly and freely protested against Hungary's policy towards that nation, and have demanded alleviation in the form of concessions to their nationality, language equality, cultural freedom, and autonomous institutions ; but I pointed out that there had never been the slightest indication that the Slovaks desired political union with the Czech people, who, although speaking a related language, were fundamentally different from them. If there was any doubt on the matter, one should at least question the Slovaks before disposing of them. The Czech delegates had nothing to say which could weaken my contention. But there was no reason why they should ; they had the promises of the Entente to rely on.

The Hungarian politicians had been invited to a discussion with me on the 24th October at four o'clock. But on my arrival early that day at Budapest, I had just read a report in the newspapers of the memorable parliamentary session of the day before, which had meant a complete reversal of the situation and the beginning of the revolution.

The street mob had forced their way into the parliament ; they had interrupted the session, mingled with the members as they streamed out into the "Kuppelsaal," and amidst horrid scenes, which the political leaders, who were also severely pressed, sought in vain to get under control, they forced Wekerle's cabinet to resign.

The King and the ex-Prime Minister endeavoured in vain to effect the transition from one government to the other by traditional methods of procedure. One candidate after another was nominated and attempted to stand. They no longer found any support in the party

leaders, who had completely lost their authority and self-confidence since the unrestrained revolutionary elements had taken the field. In the end the ill-starred Michael Károlyi ventured to offer to form a cabinet.

He was entrusted with this duty by the King, and nominated Prime Minister.

He delivered to the Archduke Joseph his oath of allegiance as such, but his ephemeral power was held solely from the usurping "national council," which rested on nothing. Károlyi had therefore justified the words which he shouted at Tisza at the last session of the delegation: "Your time is over now, and our time has come."

Not for long, it is true, but long enough to do untold mischief.

On my arrival in Budapest, Wekerle informed me that the confidential discussion which had been arranged would be pointless in view of the events of the day before, as nobody knew who was in control and where events were leading.

I had an audience at the palace, and was speedily enlightened as to my position. At the request of all parties, Wekerle's cabinet had adopted the idea of the "personal union" and had thereby virtually eliminated the joint ministers. A Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs was to be nominated immediately, so that Hungary might be separately represented at the peace negotiations. Though this might not be effected immediately, or at any rate not as long as the Hungarian cabinet crisis was awaiting solution, the authority of my office, which was a vital factor at such a critical moment, demanding the application of all one's resources, had been severely prejudiced, and I could no longer count upon effective support from Hungary, especially having regard to the state of affairs in Austria,

which was such that the government of that country was scarcely more than a nominal force.

I was naturally unaffected by the horoscopes pronounced by officious and unqualified counsellors, whom the highest quarters of government could scarcely keep at bay during those fateful days. But I felt my position shaken from the moment when Dr. Wekerle, in agreement with all the parties, considering the development of affairs in Austria as the beginning of the dissolution, demanded personal union for Hungary and sought actually to bring it about as speedily as possible. I remained loyally at my post as long as the Emperor Charles wished me to, though I had lost all desire to do so after President Wilson's reply to our request for an armistice had been received, in order to see how the conduct of the hoped-for peace negotiations by the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, whose structure was already tottering, would develop. The situation, as I found it at Budapest on the 24th October, clearly proved to me the untenability of my position.

I submitted my resignation and it was accepted.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE COLLAPSE

MY resignation coincided with the passing of the office which I was the last to hold upon a dualistic basis. It was followed by the short episode of Count Andrassy, who, however, in view of the proclamation of the transition to personal union, was already regarded as the first Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs. The value of one's direction of diplomacy is measured by one's success. This was inevitably withheld from me in all that I had at heart. And yet I look upon my period of office with a calm conscience. With the full knowledge of the actual course of events that I now have I would not act otherwise at any essential point than I have done. In view of the general circumstances of the war our defeat was a physical certainty after we had failed to secure a decisive result in the autumn campaign of 1914, for the rôle which Italy would play had been determined from the start by the course of her previous history leading up to the alliance. Since the moment when the United States came into the war, it was easy to predict that we could not win it.

And yet, and that was the tragedy of it, the war had to be resolutely fought to a finish. One was not justified in investing one's misgivings, however well grounded, with the attributes of dispensations of Providence, and it was one's duty to take advantage of any possibility of victory, however slender it might be. We were engaged in a defensive war, a struggle for our bare existence. We had to go on fighting, whether in the exaltation of military successes or oppressed by defeat. Our side could not give up the struggle. That would have meant annihilation. The enemy could have done so, had he been capable of moderation. We offered occasions for doing so. We were a match for the enemy in the field as long as numbers were equal and even against a certain superiority of numbers; this fact

for a long time produced a spirit of confidence in our group of Powers, which fortified them in continuing their resistance, although many were sick at heart who could not master their dismay in contemplating the time when the inevitable effect of numbers, the exhaustion of one side and the constant increase of strength of the other, would begin to tell.

"*Une guerre d'usure*" the French had called the war, from the moment when the Germans had failed to hurl France to the ground in the mighty advance of the autumn campaign of 1914. And the description was apt. It was recognised as such by the German army commanders, as we know from their statements before the parliamentary commissions of inquiry; in spite of any confidence in victory felt at the front and at home. The German military leaders did not lose heart, and the enthusiasm inspired by the incomparable deeds of valour of their troops no doubt caused them to forget that cold, hard logic of facts as represented by the unequal measure of men and materials.

But we in Austria-Hungary, being weaker and poorer, felt this more acutely. Want of every kind affected us more cruelly. We had to reinforce our resolution by Germany's sense of confidence and by having recourse to German assistance, since, as already explained, it was quite as impossible for us as for the Germans to shake off the war, in spite of the alluring prospects held out by certain advocates of a separate peace. But we were entitled, and it was our duty, constantly to admonish our ally and to remind him that our means were closely limited and that we ought therefore to take advantage of any elements conducive to peace. I am not the person to judge whether I always did so with sufficient emphasis, but one should bear in mind the difficulty of constantly forcing negative advice upon an ally with whom one is anxious to remain in complete

harmony ; we were in continual need of German assistance, and with the full confidence of her strength, she hastened from success to success ; the civil point of view tended to become more and more at the mercy of the decisions of the military. Germany, who, in this war which she certainly had not wished to bring about, was fighting, not for her existence, but for her position as a world Power, was more inclined to adopt a sanguine point of view than Austria-Hungary, the dismemberment of the latter Power being quite undisguisedly the mad aim of her enemies. Intoxicated by the Hindenburg victories, the Germans were more consistently inclined to regard the brilliant successes of the war as a guarantee of the certainty of final victory. Mine was the modest endeavour, as was consonant with our more obvious weakness, to turn favourable military developments to account to secure a peace by understanding. For it was only when our fortunes were in the ascendant that we could reasonably assume that the enemy would weigh the advantages of an honourable termination to the war, such as would satisfy his reasonable and moderate demands, against the immeasurable sacrifices which would be involved in its continuance, and that he would condescend to enter into a peace by negotiation. I never entertained any sanguine hopes that he would really do so. I was aware that, apart from his elaborate intelligence department, by the simplest calculation, the enemy could determine the limits to our powers of resistance almost to the day, and would believe more and more firmly in the "mathematical certainty of victory." Had we been in his position our attitude would have been just the same. But slender though our chances were, they still existed, for any war, until it is actually ended, is a game of hazard in which the incalculable plays its part. To give play to this element, "to hope even against hope," to make any effort

that was even plausible, was all that we could do. The incalculable after-results of a tornado of destiny such as this war has been, have also come into play against us and placed the seal upon our ruin.

The world crisis is not over. Nobody would still venture to assert that any one of the great problems which convulsed our globe has reached a final and complete solution. The ancient Austro-Hungarian monarchy was a product of varying centrifugal and centripetal forces trying to establish equilibrium. The former prevailed. But the new associations of states which have arisen from the scattered portions have not yet achieved equilibrium. New periods produce new forms. Those of the past—and apart from the war they could not have been maintained without radical alterations—will not arise again in the same shape. But the centripetal forces will not cease to exert their influence in the great Danubian basin amongst peoples whom nature has ordained to be mutually dependent upon one another and to supplement each others' wants by the products of their labour and their natural resources. They will seek and achieve an association, the basis of which will be the more firmly secured. The measure and the direction of their future relations will be determined by the free operation of these forces, subject to a clear appreciation of their permanent interests. Everything will have to be based upon independent agreements, which need not necessarily all have to be created simultaneously, or so as to embrace all the Succession States. Only that which is recognised as being immediately necessary will press for solution and achieve satisfactory settlement, freed from all the fetters of ancient relationships and of effete institutions, and free above all from any national discord, without the elimination of which peaceful and orderly development will not be possible in Central Europe in the future either.

We, the last responsible directors of Austro-Hungarian affairs, believe that the work we did, even during the tragic period when the inevitable destinies of the monarchy were being fulfilled, was not in vain. It was our task to hold upright the banner of ancient Austria until it sank from our weary grasp.

In history even what seem to be absolute breaks are only transitions. Within the old framework which has now vanished, our services were given in the general interests of the peoples out of which the new national states have arisen. It was in the earlier moulds that these peoples developed into that which they now seek to embody in a new living form. These moulds were not arbitrary, but grew organically in accordance with the relative forces of the various parts. The future, and perhaps even the near future, will teach us whether they have not been prematurely broken from within and from without.

Be that as it may, it was the duty of the innumerable persons who did not feel the necessity for seeking salvation for the ills of Austria-Hungary in dissolution, loyally to see the thing through ; and up to the last to maintain the hope that even if the internal structure had to be radically altered, it might be possible to do this without cutting any vital artery.

Those who served the dying Austro-Hungarian monarchy are not responsible only to the past. They are also, to a certain degree, responsible to the heirs of the monarchy, to the same peoples who, with the disappearance of the ancient régime, have become subject to a new destiny which is still shrouded in the mists of the future.

May that future develop to the benefit of all those nations, whose destinies have for so long been closely linked together, and who must continue to live side by side so that they cannot cease to watch with the most

attentive and active concern everything that affects their future development !

The outlook is still gloomy, but it is not hopeless. The anxious warning once uttered by the Austrian poet, Grillparzer, against sinking "from humanity, through nationality, to bestiality," shewed prophetic vision, but only of a part of the road. The peoples will turn about at a higher curve of the laborious mountain path which through many windings leads up to the heights which humanity is destined to attain.

The phenomena of cultural decline which we are experiencing do not signify any essential change in the character of the people. They are pathological, and are produced by the lack of discipline of the times and by the weakening of moral restrictions. These phenomena will disappear when men begin to reflect and recover their spiritual equilibrium. In the epoch that is coming nations will have to learn to refrain from trying to make good real or imaginary wrongs by reprisals. Problems of nationality are not solved through "liberation" alone. It remains a task for the future to create such boundaries as will enable all peoples to live side by side in neighbourly friendliness. This aim will be achieved, though perhaps not until certain crises have been overcome, arising out of the adjustments which will have to be made to correct the forcible dislocation of the nations. Then the path will also be smoothed for the return of humanity with all those achievements of civilisation which have become the enduring possession of mankind. It is scarcely credible that these achievements should be threatened with the destruction which we sometimes hear predicted. The civilisation of the West, which, by handing on the essence of all the cultural epochs of the past, had come to furnish standards for the whole world, may be hard pressed, and be driven

for a time from many of its most splendid seats—it will always have places of refuge where it can assert itself, so as soon to be available once more for humanity, which, when restored by work, will soon desire it again. Work is the mighty law which all peoples, victors and vanquished, daily recognise more clearly and which in the end they will obey with renewed vigour, when they have roused themselves sufficiently to tackle it—work that is free, not hedged in by the limitations of class bias.

It is needed most by the most tortured sufferers from the war, Austria and Hungary, those pathetic, shapeless trunks left over after the division of the spoil. Now they must strain all their energies, and although vital organs have been clumsily cut off and they have been deprived of some of their most essential resources, they must set to work in order that they may continue to live, and, both in their own interests and those of Europe, may find the way of salvation which alone can prevent them from becoming centres of corruption and infecting their neighbours.

Their industrious labours, inspired by the will to live, can achieve much. Europe, who cannot allow explosive matter to lie about at her very centre and on her principal highways, will achieve the rest.

APPENDIX I

SPEECH DELIVERED TO THE DELEGATION ON 25TH JANUARY 1918

DR. STRANSKY yesterday also touched upon the negotiations which I conducted with Italy and drew illustrations from them in support of his criticism of our diplomacy. I do not mean to enter into a discussion of those negotiations here. I only desire to make a few short remarks which perhaps are not superfluous even now and which I wish to be of the nature of a simple correction on matters of fact. Dr. Stransky in one breath, as it were, directed three kinds of reproaches against the negotiations and especially against my attitude. He alleged that we had: first interfered in the affairs of other states, secondly suffered the interference of other states in our affairs, and thirdly surrendered sovereign rights in the course of these negotiations.

The negotiations were a painful path which, however, had to be followed. Even at the beginning there was little prospect of success. And yet we could not allow ourselves to be terrified by this fact. Every possibility of greater or lesser success had to be explored most carefully and every advantage taken of it lest one should have made oneself liable to the reproach of having failed to exploit any opportunity, even the most slender, of preventing the worst from happening. We must remember that our treacherous ally proceeded to break the treaty of alliance and later the state of peace by stages and with a certain amount of method.

Shortly after I took office in January 1915, I received the hint from several reputable quarters that the only way of restraining Italy from breaking her neutrality was to surrender Italian Tirol. I decisively rejected these suggestions at the time. The results have proved me to have been right. Knowing the course of the Italian campaign, anyone can to-day imagine how matters would have developed if the Italians had stood in South Tirol at the beginning of the war. Nobody to-day believes that the voluntary cession of this territory would have restrained the Italians from declaring war later on. In the negotiations themselves Italy travelled gradually from Giolitti's "Parecchio" to Sonnino's earlier phraseology in which he spoke of "some satisfaction for Italy's national aspirations."

The object of the negotiations themselves was not, as far as

we were concerned, to gain time or to keep the Italians at bay until we had completed our preparations or improved our defences. Our army command was adequately informed as to Italy's preparations for the war, and they knew that Italy was not yet ready to fight. On the contrary, it was Italy that sought to drag out the negotiations. She had two reasons for doing so: on the one hand she wished to mask her military preparations as far as possible behind a curtain of diplomatic activity, and, on the other hand, to educate Italian public opinion, which was not yet entirely amenable to a war policy, by firing the Italian imagination with purely national, irredentist aims.

Italy gradually came to put forward her real aims and demands. These became more and more extravagant. Under the stress of the military situation, we considered it advisable to fall in with these demands as far as possible, until at last we reached the stage when Italy threw off the hypocritical mask of merely national aspirations and revealed her purely imperialistic aims. In the course of the negotiations Italy endeavoured immediately to secure the concessions which we had made. The *Exécution immédiate* or, as it was afterwards called, the *mise en effet* was demanded. This is what Dr. Stransky was alluding to when he said that Sonnino was compelled to force us to this *mise en effet* because he was pressed by, and had to make a definite statement to, parliament. Dr. Stransky asked what kind of figure did a government cut which had to have its intentions explained to a foreign parliament with the respectful request to be allowed to take part in drawing up the statement.

I must make a correction here. We expressed no wish of the kind. Baron Sonnino demanded the *mise en effet* with the greatest insistence without being urged by parliament at all, though he alleged that it was parliamentary pressure that made it essential for him to achieve a definite result in the negotiations which, at his request, had been conducted in the strictest secrecy, and were therefore also concealed from parliament, hoping that we should yield when Sonnino stated that he could not stand up against the Italian parliament.

It was naturally not our business to concern ourselves with the parliamentary necessities of the Italian government. But as

soon as Sonnino had told us that he intended to make a statement we naturally had to ask the Italian government to agree with us as to the content of this statement. There is nothing new in this; it is the usual practice. Whenever two governments who are not at war with one another have to make statements affecting both of them, it is regarded as an absolute matter of course that they come to an agreement as to the terms of the statement.

As Dr. Stransky put it, it seemed as though Italy was being held up as a model of parliamentarism which in our parliamentary ineptitude we could not hope to imitate. During the whole period in which I was in charge of the foreign office I bitterly deplored the fact that there was no parliament in Austria at that time, for in the Italian negotiations it was principally Austrian interests that were at stake. Moreover, I deeply regretted that I could not appear before my own forum, the delegations, to give an account of what I had done and left undone. But at that phase of the negotiations it was quite impossible for me to establish any direct parliamentary contact, and I therefore took the only course open to me, and got into touch with the members of the most widely different parliamentary parties in Austria, and they, fully appreciating the position, were most cordial in giving the fullest expression to their view and impressions. My line of action was defined officially in complete agreement with the responsible quarters. I was particularly careful to keep in close and continuous agreement on all points with both governments, so that in all the details of these negotiations I was covered by the fact that I had their concurrence.

Dr. Stransky's second point was that we exceeded our authority in various questions which came up for discussion in the course of negotiations. He mentioned specifically the question of the Trieste University, and that of a new *Gemeindestatut*, etc. To this I can but reply that this was not the case, since on all such points I was in constant touch with the Austrian government and always acted in agreement with it. The matter had not come to be dealt with in the way of parliamentary discussion or otherwise by parliament and there was no likelihood that it should.

And now as to the *mise en effet*. The Italian government itself urged the matter of the *mise en effet* with the greatest

emphasis and impatience. They did so for reasons which I have already indicated in mentioning the fact that it had been suggested to me some time previously, not by the Italian government, but by other parties, to surrender Italian Tirol. We saw that Italy would not have been any more manageable if she had succeeded in gaining her object at the time. There was no doubt that she would have attacked us just the same. She would have established herself there and would not have been hard put to it to find an excuse for declaring war on us, as is clear now. Italy was, after all, principally concerned in achieving her imperialistic aims, the control of the Adriatic, predominance on the eastern coast of the Adriatic, etc.

I now come to Dr. Stransky's question regarding the intervention of a foreign power. It is not clear to me to what he refers.

Dr. Stransky: Germany's guarantee.

Joint Finance Minister Baron Burián: With reference to Germany's guarantee, I would observe that we had eventually reached a stage in the Italian negotiations at which we were agreed upon a certain measure of concessions which for a time was not definitely rejected by Italy, although it is true that Sonnino was claiming time for reflection, and by his dilatory methods was reserving all kinds of excuses for subsequent evasion. Then the question of guarantees cropped up. Sonnino held that if the immediate *mise en effet* could not be secured it was our duty to furnish adequate guarantees. I did not reject this in principle, for I regarded it as my duty, if possible, to bring these negotiations to a successful conclusion. It was necessary of course immediately to discuss what was to be the nature of the guarantees. Further particulars on this point will be found in the Red Book. Sonnino was not satisfied with anything that we could advise and he demanded, amongst other things, the guarantee of the German Empire. Our relations with Germany being such as they are, that country's guarantee cannot possibly be described as "intervention by a foreign state." Germany never, for a moment, offered her guarantee, let alone forcing it upon us. When the idea of a guarantee emerged in the course of our discussions with Italy we naturally got into touch with Berlin on the question and found them exceedingly anxious to

fall in with the idea if it could contribute to the success of the negotiations.

I believe that it would have been a mistake, when we had made up our minds to such a great and painful sacrifice, to allow the success of the whole matter to be jeopardised by a question of form. I therefore actually did not hesitate, in case the occasion should arise, to make use of the German guarantee. As the negotiations were broken off soon afterwards no such guarantee was ever actually given.

Another complaint which Dr. Stransky had to make against the conduct of the negotiations was that they contemplated the establishment of "the domination of one race over another" in an Austrian Crown Province (Kronland) which would be contrary to the constitutional law, and in his view at any rate would have exceeded the authority of the negotiators. It is not for me here to interpret the intention, the content and the scope of this Austrian law. But on this point too I appealed to the Austrian department concerned and received its assent if necessary to agree to such a formula. There was in point of fact no question of predominance; the wording of the point in question was "protection of the national institutions of the Italian population." It was therefore a question of protection for the *status quo*. (Dr. Koroschec: "predominance" is the word used!)

I looked at the Red Book yesterday and this word does not occur in the text of our proposals. The alleged quotation has been taken from the Red Book. Will the honourable member kindly show me where the word occurs? I have searched and failed to find it. Possibly it occurs in a draft of the Italian government.

Gentlemen, I will limit myself to this short explanation, as I do not wish to make excessive claims upon your patience. I believe that I have succeeded in proving that our negotiations at that time, or shall we say the general method of our negotiations, which I have been endeavouring to explain to you in their true light, does not merit reproach.

APPENDIX II

EXCHANGE OF NOTES WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES REGARDING AMERICAN DE- LIVERIES OF MUNITIONS OF WAR TO THE ENTENTE

*The Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs to Amba-
sador Penfield.*

I. AND R. MINISTRY OF THE IMPERIAL AND ROYAL HOUSE AND FOR FOREIGN
AFFAIRS

VIENNA, 29th June 1915.

THE far-reaching effects which result from the fact that for a long time a traffic in munitions of war to the greatest extent has been carried on between the United States of America on the one hand and Great Britain and its allies on the other, while Austria-Hungary as well as Germany have been absolutely excluded from the American market, have from the very beginning attracted the most serious attention of the Imperial and Royal Government.

If now the undersigned permits himself to address himself to this question, with which the Washington Cabinet has been concerned until now only with the Imperial German Government, he follows the injunction of imperative duty to protect the interests entrusted to him from further serious damage which results from this situation as well to Austria-Hungary as to the German Empire.

Although the Imperial and Royal Government is absolutely convinced that the attitude of the Federal Government in this connection emanates from no other intention than to maintain the strictest neutrality and to conform to the letter of the provisions of international treaties, nevertheless the question arises whether the conditions as they have developed during the course of the war, certainly independently of the will of the Federal Government, are not such as in effect thwart the intentions of the Washington Cabinet or even actually oppose them. In the affirmative case—and affirmation, in the opinion of the Imperial and Royal Government, cannot be doubted—there immediately follows the further question whether it would not seem possible, even imperative, that appropriate measures be adopted toward bringing into full effect the desire of the Federal Government to maintain an attitude of strict parity with respect to both belli-

gerent parties. The Imperial and Royal Government does not hesitate to answer also this question unqualifiedly in the affirmative.

It cannot certainly have escaped the attention of the American government, which has so eminently co-operated in the work of The Hague, that the meaning and essence of neutrality are in no way exhaustively dealt with in the fragmentary provisions of the pertinent treaties. If one takes into consideration particularly the genesis of Article 7 of the Fifth and Thirteenth Conventions, respectively, upon which the Federal Government clearly relies in the present case, and the wording of which, as is in no way to be denied, affords it a formal pretext for the toleration of traffic in munitions of war now being carried on by the United States, it is only necessary, in order to measure the true spirit and import of this provision, which moreover appears to have been departed from in the prevention of the delivery of vessels of war and in the prevention of certain deliveries to vessels of war of belligerent nations, to point out the fact that the detailed privileges conceded to neutral states in the sense of the preamble to the above-mentioned convention are limited by the requirements of neutrality which conform to the universally recognised principles of international law.

According to all authorities on international law who concern themselves more particularly with the question now under consideration, a neutral government may not permit traffic in contraband of war to be carried on without hindrance when this traffic assumes such a form or such dimensions that the neutrality of the nation becomes involved thereby.

If any one of the various criteria which have been laid down in science in this respect be used as a basis in determining the permissibility of commerce in contraband, one reaches the conclusion from each of these criteria that the exportation of war requisites from the United States, as is being carried on in the present war, is not to be brought into accord with the demands of neutrality.

The question now before us is surely not whether American industries which are engaged in the manufacture of war material should be protected from loss in the export trade that was theirs in time of peace. Rather has that industry soared to unimagined

heights. In order to turn out the huge quantities of arms, ammunition, and other war material of every description ordered in the past months by Great Britain and her allies from the United States, not only the full capacity of the existing plants, but also their transformation and enlargement and the creation of new large plants, as well as a flocking of workmen of all trades into that branch of industry, in brief far-reaching changes of economic life encompassing the whole country, became necessary. From no quarter then can come any question of the right of the American government to prohibit through the issuance of an embargo that enormous exportation of war implements that is openly carried on and besides is commonly known to be availed of by only one of the parties to the war. If the Federal Government would exercise that power it possesses, it could not lay itself open to blame if, in order to keep within the requirements of the law of the land, it adopted the course of enacting a law. For while the principle obtains that a neutral state may not alter the rules in force within its province concerning its attitude toward belligerents while war is being waged, yet this principle, as clearly appears from the preamble to the Thirteenth Hague Convention, suffers an exception in the case *où l'expérience acquise en démontrerait la nécessité pour la sauvegarde de ses droits*. [Where experience has shown the necessity thereof for the protection of its rights.]

Moreover, this case is already established for the American government through the fact that Austria-Hungary, as well as Germany, is cut off from all commercial intercourse with the United States of America without the existence of a legal prerequisite therefor—a legally constituted blockade.

In reply to the possible objection that, notwithstanding the willingness of American industry to furnish merchandise to Austria-Hungary and Germany as well as to Great Britain and her allies, it is not possible for the United States of America to trade with Austria-Hungary and Germany as the result of the war situation, it may be pointed out that the Federal Government is undoubtedly in a position to improve the situation described. It would be amply sufficient to confront the opponents of Austria-Hungary and Germany with the possibility of the prohibition of the exportation of foodstuffs and raw materials in case legitimate

commerce in these articles between the Union and the two Central Powers should not be allowed. If the Washington Cabinet should find itself prepared for an action in this sense, it would not only be following the tradition always held in such high regard in the United States of contending for the freedom of legitimate maritime commerce, but would also earn the high merit of nullifying the wanton efforts of the enemies of Austria-Hungary and Germany to use hunger as an ally.

The Imperial and Royal Government may therefore, in the spirit of the excellent relations which have never ceased to exist between the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the United States of America, appeal to the Federal Government in sincere friendship, in view of the expositions here set forth, to subject its previously adopted standpoint in this so important question to a mature reconsideration. A revision of the attitude observed by the government of the Union in the sense of the views advocated by the Imperial and Royal Government would, according to the convictions of the latter, be not only within the bounds of the rights and obligations of a neutral government, but also in close keeping with those principles dictated by true humanity and love of peace which the United States has ever written on its banner.

The undersigned has the honour to ask the good offices of His Excellency the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America, Mr. Frederic Courtland Penfield, to convey the foregoing by telegram to the attention of the Washington Cabinet; he avails himself, etc.

BURIÁN.

The Ambassador of the United States of America at Vienna, Mr. Penfield, to the Minister of the Imperial and Royal House and for Foreign Affairs, Baron Burián.

No. 2758

VIENNA, 16th August 1915.

THE undersigned Ambassador of the United States of America did not fail to communicate to his government the full contents of the esteemed Note, dated the 29th June last, in which His Excellency Baron Burián, Imperial and Royal Minister for Foreign Affairs, set forth the views and comments of the Imperial

and Royal Government on the attitude of the government of the United States in permitting the traffic in arms and ammunition between American manufacturers and Great Britain and her allies. He is now instructed by his government to communicate the following in reply :

The government of the United States has given careful consideration to the statement of the Imperial and Royal Government in regard to the exportation of arms and ammunition from the United States to the countries at war with Austria-Hungary and Germany. The government of the United States notes with satisfaction the recognition by the Imperial and Royal Government of the undoubted fact that its attitude with regard to the exportation of arms and ammunition from the United States is prompted by its intention to "maintain the strictest neutrality and to conform to the letter of the provisions of international treaties," but is surprised to find the Imperial and Royal Government implying that the observance of the strict principles of the law under the conditions which have developed in the present war is insufficient and asserting that this government should go beyond the long-recognised rules governing such traffic by neutrals and adopt measures to "maintain an attitude of strict parity with respect to both belligerent parties."

To this assertion of an obligation to change or modify the rules of international usage on account of special conditions the government of the United States cannot accede. The recognition of an obligation of this sort unknown to the international practice of the past would impose upon every neutral nation a duty to sit in judgment on the progress of a war and to restrict its commercial intercourse with a belligerent whose naval successes prevented the neutral from trade with the enemy. The contention of the Imperial and Royal Government appears to be that the advantages gained to a belligerent by its superiority on the sea should be equalised by the neutral powers by the establishment of a system of non-intercourse with the victor. The Imperial and Royal Government confines its comments to arms and ammunition, but if the principle for which it contends is sound it should apply with equal force to all articles of contraband. A belligerent controlling the high seas might possess an ample supply of arms and ammunition but be in want of food

and clothing. On the novel principle that equalisation is a neutral duty, neutral nations would be obligated to place an embargo on such articles because one of the belligerents could not obtain them through commercial intercourse.

But if this principle so strongly urged by the Imperial and Royal Government should be admitted to obtain by reason of the superiority of a belligerent at sea, ought it not to operate equally as to a belligerent superior on land? Applying this theory of equalisation, a belligerent who lacks the necessary munitions to contend successfully on land ought to be permitted to purchase them from neutrals, while a belligerent with an abundance of war stores or with the power to produce them should be debarred from such traffic.

Manifestly the idea of strict neutrality now advanced by the Imperial and Royal Government would involve a neutral nation in a mass of perplexities which would obscure the whole field of international obligation, produce economic confusion, and deprive all commerce and industry of legitimate fields of enterprise already heavily burdened by the unavoidable restrictions of war.

In this connection it is pertinent to direct the attention of the Imperial and Royal Government to the fact that Austria-Hungary and Germany, particularly the latter, have during the years preceding the present European war produced a great surplus of arms and ammunition which they sold throughout the world and especially to belligerents. Never during that period did either of them suggest or apply the principle now advocated by the Imperial and Royal Government.

During the Boer War between Great Britain and the South African Republics the patrol of the coast of neighbouring neutral colonies by British naval vessels prevented arms and ammunition reaching the Transvaal or the Orange Free State. The allied Republics were in a situation almost identical in that respect with that in which Austria-Hungary and Germany find themselves at the present time. Yet, in spite of the commercial isolation of one belligerent, Germany sold to Great Britain, the other belligerent, hundreds of thousands of kilos of explosives, gunpowder, cartridges, shot and weapons; and it is known that Austria-Hungary also sold similar munitions to the same pur-

chaser, though in smaller quantities. While as compared with the present war the quantities sold were small (a table of the sales is appended) the principle of neutrality involved was the same. If at that time Austria-Hungary and her present ally had refused to sell arms and ammunition to Great Britain on the ground that to do so would violate the spirit of strict neutrality, the Imperial and Royal Government might with greater consistency and greater force urge its present contention.

It might be further pointed out that during the Crimean War large quantities of arms and military stores were furnished to Russia by Prussian manufacturers, that during the recent war between Turkey and Italy, as this government is advised, arms and ammunition were furnished to the Ottoman Government by Germany, and that during the Balkan Wars the belligerents were supplied with munitions by both Austria-Hungary and Germany. While these latter cases are not analogous as is the case of the South African War to the situation of Austria-Hungary and Germany in the present war, they nevertheless clearly indicate the long-established practice of the two Empires in the matter of trade in war supplies.

In view of the foregoing statements this government is reluctant to believe that the Imperial and Royal Government will ascribe to the United States a lack of impartial neutrality in continuing its legitimate trade in all kinds of supplies used to render the armed forces of a belligerent efficient, even though the circumstances of the present war prevent Austria-Hungary from obtaining such supplies from the markets of the United States, which have been and remain, so far as the action and policy of this government are concerned, open to all belligerents alike.

But, in addition to the question of principle, there is practical and substantial reason why the government of the United States has from the foundation of the Republic to the present time advocated and practised unrestricted trade in arms and military supplies. It has never been the policy of this country to maintain in time of peace a large military establishment or stores of arms and ammunition sufficient to repel invasion by a well-equipped and powerful enemy. It has desired to remain at peace with all nations and to avoid any appearance of menacing

such peace by the threat of its armies and navies. In consequence of this standing policy the United States would, in the event of attack by a foreign power, be at the outset of the war seriously, if not fatally, embarrassed by the lack of arms and ammunition and by the means to produce them in sufficient quantities to supply the requirements of national defence. The United States have always depended upon the right and power to purchase arms and ammunition from neutral nations in case of foreign attack. This right, which it claims for itself, it cannot deny to others.

A nation whose principle and policy it is to rely upon international obligations and international justice to preserve its political and territorial integrity might become the prey of an aggressive nation whose policy and practice it is to increase its military strength during times of peace with the design of conquest unless the nation attacked can, after war has been declared, go into the markets of the world and purchase the means to defend itself against the aggressor.

The general adoption by the nations of the world of the theory that neutral powers ought to prohibit the sale of arms and ammunition to belligerents would compel every nation to have in readiness at all times sufficient munitions of war to meet any emergency which might arise and to erect and maintain establishments for the manufacture of arms and ammunition sufficient to supply the needs of its military and naval forces throughout the progress of a war. Manifestly the application of this theory would result in every nation becoming an armed camp ready to resist aggression and tempted to employ force in asserting its rights rather than appeal to reason and justice for the settlement of international disputes.

Perceiving as it does that the adoption of the principle that it is the duty of a neutral to prohibit the sale of arms and ammunition to a belligerent during the progress of a war would inevitably give the advantage to the belligerent which had encouraged the manufacture of munitions in time of peace and which had laid in vast stores of arms and ammunition in anticipation of war, the government of the United States is convinced that the adoption of the theory would force militarism on the world and work against that universal peace which is the desire

and purpose of all nations which exalt justice and righteousness in their relations with one another.

The government of the United States, in the foregoing discussion of the practical reason why it has advocated and practised trade in munitions, wishes to be understood as speaking with no thought of expressing or implying any judgment with regard to the circumstances of the present war, but as merely putting very frankly the argument in this matter which has been conclusive in determining the policy of the United States.

While the practice of nations, so well illustrated by that of Austria-Hungary and Germany during the South African War, and the manifest evil which would result from a change of that practice, render compliance with the suggestions of the Imperial and Royal Government out of the question, certain assertions appearing in the Austro-Hungarian statement as grounds for its contentions cannot be passed over without comment. These assertions are substantially as follows : (1) That the exportation of arms and ammunition from the United States to belligerents contravenes the preamble of the Hague Convention No. 13 of 1907 ; (2) That it is inconsistent with the refusal of this government to allow delivery of supplies to vessels of war on the high seas ; (3) That, " according to all authorities on international law who concern themselves more properly with the question," exportation should be prevented " when this traffic assumes such a form or such dimensions that the neutrality of a nation becomes involved thereby."

As to the assertion that the exportation of arms and ammunition contravenes the preamble of the Hague Convention No. 13 of 1907, this government presumes that reference is made to the last paragraph of the preamble, which is as follows : " Seeing that, in this category of ideas, these rules should not, in principle, be altered, in the course of the war, by a neutral Power, except in a case where experience has shown the necessity for such change for the protection of the rights of that Power."

Manifestly the only ground to change the rules laid down by the Convention, one of which it should be noted explicitly declares that a neutral is not bound to prohibit the exportation of contraband of war, is the necessity of a neutral Power to do so in order to protect its own rights. The right and duty to deter-

mine when this necessity exists rests with the neutral, not with a belligerent. It is discretionary and even mandatory. If a neutral Power does not avail itself of the right, a belligerent is not privileged to complain, for in doing so it would be in the position of declaring to the neutral Power what is necessary to protect that Power's own rights. The Imperial and Royal Government cannot but perceive that a complaint of this nature would invite just rebuke.

With reference to the asserted inconsistency of the course adopted by this government in relation to the exportation of arms and ammunition and that followed in not allowing supplies to be taken from its ports to ships of war on the high seas, it is only necessary to point out that the prohibition of supplies to ships of war rests upon the principle that a neutral Power must not permit its territory to become a naval base for either belligerent. A warship may under certain restrictions obtain fuel and supplies in a neutral port once in three months. To permit merchant vessels acting as tenders to carry supplies more often than once in three months and in unlimited amount would defeat the purpose of the rule, and might constitute the neutral territory a naval base. Furthermore this government is unaware that any Austro-Hungarian ship of war has sought to obtain supplies from a port in the United States either directly or indirectly. This subject has, however, already been discussed with the Imperial German Government to which the position of this government was fully set forth the 24th December 1914.

In view of the positive assertion in the statement of the Imperial and Royal Government as to the unanimity of the opinions of text writers as to the exportation of contraband being unneutral, this government has caused a careful examination of the principal authorities on international law to be made. As a result of this examination it has come to the conclusion that the Imperial and Royal Government has been misled and has inadvertently made an erroneous assertion. Less than one-fifth of the authorities consulted advocate unreservedly the prohibition of the export of contraband. Several of those which would constitute this minority admit that the practice of nations has been otherwise. It may not be inopportune to direct particular attention to the declaration of the German authority,

Paul Einicke, who states that at the beginning of a war belligerents have never remonstrated against the enactment of prohibitions on trade in contraband, but adds "that such prohibitions may be considered as violations of neutrality, or at least as unfriendly acts, if they are enacted during a war with the purpose to close unexpectedly the sources of supply to a party which heretofore had relied on them"; however, the government of the United States deems it unnecessary to extend further at the present time a consideration of the statement of the Austro-Hungarian government. The principles of International Law, the practice of nations, the national safety of the United States and other nations without great military and naval establishments, the prevention of increased armies and navies, the adoption of peaceful methods for the adjustment of international differences and finally neutrality itself are opposed to the prohibition by a neutral nation of the exportation of arms, ammunition or other munitions of war to belligerent Powers during the progress of the war.

The undersigned avails himself of this opportunity to renew to His Excellency the Imperial and Royal Minister for Foreign Affairs the assurance of his highest consideration.

(Signed) FREDERICK C. PENFIELD, M.P.

To His Excellency,

Baron Burián von Rajecz,

Imperial and Royal Minister for Foreign Affairs, etc., etc.,
Vienna.

GERMAN EXPORTS OF ARMS AND AMMUNITION TO GREAT BRITAIN

Articles.	1899. Quantity 100 kilos.	1900. Quantity 100 kilos.	1901. Quantity 100 kilos.	1902. Quantity 100 kilos.
Explosives	4,342	6,014	5,147	3,645
Gunpowder	28	658	243	69
Gunbarrels	12	366	21	133
Shot of malleable iron, not polished, etc. .	30	43	38	
Shot, further manufactured, polished, etc., not lead coated		4		
Shot, nickelled or lead coated, with copper rings, etc.		3,018	176	
Weapons for war purposes			18	2
Cartridges with copper shells and per- cussion caps	904	1,595	866	982

AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN EXPORTS OF ARMS AND AMMUNITION TO GREAT BRITAIN

Articles.	1899. Quantity 100 kilos.	1900. Quantity 100 kilos.	1901. Quantity 100 kilos.	1902. Quantity 100 kilos.
Arms (exclusive of small arms) . . .	190	374	12	
Separate parts of arms	1	1		
Small arms	2	3	80	5
Ammunition and explosives under tariff No. 346	1	7	16	51
Other ammunition and explosives . .			4	

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Baron Burián, to the Ambassador of the United States of America at Vienna.

THE undersigned had the honour of receiving the much-esteemed Note of the 16th August of this year, No. 2758, in which His Excellency the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America, Mr. Frederic Courtland Penfield, was good enough to define the position taken by the government of the United States with respect to the standpoint represented by the Imperial and Royal Government in the question of the delivery of war requisites to Great Britain and her allies.

The representations which the Washington Cabinet have devoted to this question disclose the various points of view which are controlling for the government of the United States in this matter, and which according to their opinion prevent them from accommodating themselves to the views of the Imperial and Royal Government. Much as the Imperial and Royal Government have endeavoured to thoroughly examine the points which were presented as pertinent by the Washington Cabinet, the most careful weighing and evaluation thereof cannot induce them to deviate from the standpoint set forth in their Note of the 29th June of this year, No. 59465.

The arguments of the government of the Union are for a great part based upon the incorrect assumption that the Imperial and Royal Government had in any way contested the right which Article 7 of the Seventh and Thirteenth Hague Conventions accords to the subjects of neutral powers to supply belligerents with contraband, whereas the above-mentioned Note

of the Imperial and Royal Government expressly stated that the text—but only the text—of the provision referred to affords the government of the Union with a formal pretext for tolerating the traffic in munitions of war in which its citizens are at present engaged. It is a matter of course that the Imperial and Royal Government did not remotely expect a deviation from an effective treaty on the part of the Washington Cabinet ; they merely pointed out that, according to their opinion, that provision should not be interpreted in a manner which would be at variance with the fundamental conception and the highest principles of the law of neutrality. It is true that from the progressive codification of international law there arises the danger that the principles of law laid down in written agreements be regarded as the essence of international law and in this way its most general fundamental conceptions, in so far as they have not been expressly fixed in state treaties, be overlooked.

However, this possibility should be prevented with particular reference to matters of the law of neutrality, and in this sense it appears to be emphasised in the preamble to the Thirteenth Hague Convention (paragraphs 2 and 3) that the stipulations of this Convention represent only fragments which cannot cover all circumstances which may arise in practice and which find their corrective and supplement in the general principles of international law.

The Imperial and Royal Government then focussed their statement in this matter upon the special problem of whether the treaty provision does not find its limitation in these principles ; and in appealing to the opinion of science in their affirmation of the question they had in mind and could only have had in mind those authorities which inquire especially whether the otherwise permissible exportation of war requisites does not under certain circumstances involve a compromise of neutrality. In no place in the Note of the 29th June of this year is an assertion to be found to the effect that writers are unanimously of the view that the exportation of contraband is contrary to neutrality.

Further, the Imperial and Royal Government have in no way advocated a principle of "equalisation." As a matter of fact they did not base their suggestion in the question of the exportation of war requisites upon the fact that they are not themselves

in a position to draw munitions of war from the United States of America ; they are indeed of the opinion that the excessive exportation of war requisites would not be permissible even if it were taking place to the countries of both belligerent parties. It has never occurred to the Imperial and Royal Government that it is obligatory upon a neutral Power to equalise the disadvantage of which Austria-Hungary finds itself in not being able to draw munitions of war from the neutral territory by forbidding its subjects traffic in such objects with the enemies of the Monarchy. They only objected that the economic life of the United States had been made serviceable to the greatest extent by the creation of new and the enlargement of existing concerns for the manufacture and exportation of war requisites, and thus, so to say, been militarised, if it be permitted to use here this much misused-word.

But in the concentration of so many forces to the one end, the delivery of war requisites, which, although not so intended, actually result in an effective support of one of the belligerent parties, which appears all the more surprising when such articles as are not even contraband are not being supplied from the United States to the other belligerent party lies a *fait nouveau*, which weakens reference to supposed precedents in other wars. The parallel with former wars fails particularly as these were always wars between two individual Powers or wars between groups constituted of fewer Powers. Under this condition it was possible that if war supplies were delivered from a neutral country to only one belligerent party, the opponent could turn to other neutrals. But in the present war the United States is the only Power which can be reasonably considered in connection with such deliveries. For this reason the exportation of war requisites from the Union, as it is now being carried on, acquires quite another significance than that which the exportation of contraband could ever before have had. As all of these decisive points appeared in their full import only during the course of the war, the Austro-Hungarian Government consider themselves justified in the view that, in the sense of the last paragraph of the preamble to the Thirteenth Hague Convention, these points contain sufficient grounds for changing the practice hitherto adhered to by the United States. Complete and strict impartiality,

such as is being aimed at by the Washington Cabinet, and thus abstention from every direct or indirect support or assistance of a belligerent party, doubtlessly appertains to the rights of a neutral state. If experience shows that an embargo of any character whatsoever becomes necessary for this purpose during the course of a war, this Power is justified in changing its previous neutrality practice.

On the other hand, the present case, which differs as completely from all former cases, represents a *fait nouveau* which, as already intimated, does not fall under the cited Article 7 and therefore cannot be regarded otherwise than "an unforeseen case," which in the sense of the preamble to the Thirteenth Convention (paragraph 3) must be dealt with according to the general principles of international law, as has been set forth above.

Nor did the suggestion made by the Imperial and Royal Government with respect to the importation of foodstuffs and raw materials proceed from the idea that a neutral government is bound to compensate for the advantages attained by one belligerent party over another by a system of non-intercourse with the former. As may be seen from the Note of the 29th June of this year, the aforesaid suggestion had merely the purpose of representing to the Washington Cabinet, which had presented the argument that, in consequence of the war situation, it was impossible for the United States to carry on commerce with the Central Powers, that it lay within the power of the government of the Union to open up the possibility of doing so. In fact, it is not the maritime successes of Great Britain and her allies which caused the cessation of trade between America and Austria-Hungary, at least as far as non-contraband goods are concerned, but the illegal measures adopted by the Entente Powers, which, as is not unknown to the Imperial and Royal Government, are also regarded as illegal by the government of the Union.

The Imperial and Royal Government do not indeed deny that, if the Washington Cabinet should accommodate themselves to the Austro-Hungarian view, the position of the United States of America toward the two belligerent parties in the domain of commerce would be less unequal than is at present the case. But it appears to the Imperial and Royal Government that an argument against a suggestion which is perhaps otherwise

recognised by a neutral Power as justifiable from a standpoint of neutrality is all the less to be deduced from the foregoing, since, even according to the view of the Washington Cabinet, it is certainly not the task of a neutral state to shape its position as unequally as possible to the two belligerent parties or, in case such an inequality exists, not to disturb it under any circumstances.

As opposed to the assumption of the government of the Union that, in the opinion of the Imperial and Royal Government, the exportation of arms and ammunition conflicted with the last paragraph of the preamble to the Thirteenth Convention, it may be emphasised that the Imperial and Royal Government based their position against the exportation of war requisites, as represented above, on paragraphs 2 and 3 of the preamble. The appeal to the latter paragraph was intended to be in connection with the question of the illegitimate exclusion of Austria-Hungary from the American market and was for the purpose of showing that for this very reason the government of the Union would be justified in issuing an embargo by legislative means.

If the Government of the United States, as it would appear, mean to express the view that the government of a belligerent Power are not warranted in speaking in matters of the preservation or exercise of a right of a neutral state, this is perhaps to be explained by the fact that the Washington Cabinet gave a too restrictive interpretation to the last-mentioned paragraph, to the effect that this paragraph refers only to strictly personal rights, the protection of which even in the opinion of the Imperial and Royal Government must naturally be left to the discretion of the neutral state.

The aforesaid paragraph, however, as is clear from the report which the French delegate, M. Renault, made to the Committee of the whole at the Hague Conference upon the Thirteenth Convention (Second International Peace Conference, Acts and Documents, volume 1, page 326) has in view the case of the observance of neutrality, and therefore the privilege of approaching a neutral government with appeal to the said passage cannot be denied to a belligerent, in case the question of the protection of the rights of a neutral state touches upon the sphere of rights of the belligerent.

The Imperial and Royal Government have followed with keen interest the representations of the government of the Union wherein the points of view which make it imperative for the Washington Cabinet to place no restrictions upon the exportation of war material during the present war are set forth ; however, they do not abandon the hope of meeting the approval of the government of the Union in remarking that these points of view of a purely practical nature do not influence the legal aspect of the case, and it must remain uninvestigated by us whether the fact that the manufacturer of requisites of war in the United States could assume such large dimensions would not rather justify the conclusion that the United States, where all requisites for this production, viz. manual labour, natural resources and capital exist in abundance, would not be dependent upon drawing war material from abroad, in case it should have to conduct a war of its own, in which their own cause would increase the energy of its citizens.

The Imperial and Royal Government particularly beg to add the following :

In citing the precedents appealed to by the Washington Cabinet, which, as already mentioned, cannot, however, be recognised as such, the government of the Union emphasise the example of the Boer War, during which a commercial isolation of one of the belligerent parties analogous to that in the present war occurred. In truth such an analogy can scarcely be recognised, because at that time Great Britain had not proclaimed a prohibition of trade such as that presented by the present illegal measures of the London Cabinet, and because a commercial isolation certainly cannot be seen in the prevention of the importation of arms and ammunitions, as mentioned by the government of the Union, to say nothing of the fact that the exportation of war material from Austria-Hungary in the Boer War, just as in other wars in which such exportation took place at all, the bounds of reasonableness were never overstepped.

As to the reference of the Washington Cabinet to the German authority, the ground has been cut from under it and the conclusions derived therefrom by the fact that, as in the meantime must have become known to the government of the Union, Mr. Einicke has publicly protested against the use of a passage of

his treatise on neutrality in maritime warfare in support of the attitude of the Washington Cabinet. Moreover, the Imperial and Royal Government regard it as a matter of course that a neutral state must not proclaim an embargo with the intention of injuring one of the belligerent parties. It is equally a matter of course that it can never be asserted an embargo which a state has proclaimed for the maintenance of its neutrality that this was done with a view of injuring one of the belligerent parties.

Finally, the observations of the government of the Union dealing with the provisioning of vessels of war are apparently based upon a misunderstanding. In mentioning the prohibition of the delivery of vessels of war, and the prohibition of certain deliveries to vessels of war, the Imperial and Royal Government had no concrete case in view, but rather the prohibition expressed in Articles 8, 19 and 20 of the Thirteenth Hague Convention.

The undersigned has the honour to appeal to the kindness of His Excellency the American Ambassador with the most respectful request that he be good enough to communicate to the Washington Cabinet by telegraph the foregoing friendly arguments, which are merely intended as a final supplement to the statement of the legal aspect of the matter as defined in the Note of the 29th June of this year with regard to the points set forth by the government of the Union, and at the same time the undersigned avails himself, etc.

(Signed) BURIÁN.

The translation of Count Burián's two notes to the United States are taken from the Official Documents published in the "American Journal of International Law."

APPENDIX III

STATEMENT ON THE POSITION FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE TWO PRIME MINISTERS, 15TH JULY 1918

It is not an easy matter to present a picture of the general world situation when events are crowding upon one another with such rapidity. Everything is in a state of flux, and repetitions of what has often been said as to causes and responsibilities in the past do not help in forming a judgment, for everyone has long ago made up his own mind.

The consequences of the war have already gone far beyond the range of its original causes, and indicate the way everything hangs together.

The present phase of events and developments, too, casts a sharp light upon the subjects at issue between the parties at the commencement of the terrible struggle, and perhaps is not without some indication of a change in their relationships.

In the midst of their terrible defensive struggle, every stage of which has been crowned with success, the Central Powers seek only to induce a desire for peace on the part of the enemy.

If we summarise all that has been said by the enemy on the subject of war aims we shall perceive three main headings under which it is sought to justify a continuance of bloodshed.

I. Ideals of humanity shall be realised. Freedom shall be established amongst all peoples and they shall form a world league, and in the future decide their disputes by judicial process and not by arms. Any domination that conflicts with this is to be eliminated.

II. Various territorial changes are to be carried out at the expense of the Central Powers. These plans of annexation, although with variations, are generally known, but the intention exists too especially with regard to Austria-Hungary of proceeding with internal dismemberment in order to form new states.

III. Finally our opponents would demand expiation and punish us for our misdeeds; they would have us do penance for having ventured to protect ourselves effectively against their attacks. Our defensive measures are called militarism and must therefore be destroyed.

Meanwhile the only aims which are at practical issue between the combatants are those connected with territory.

We too would espouse the great interests of humanity, the claims of justice, freedom, honour and peace and equality between the races, for which our enemies claim to be forced to fight against us ; we do not require instruction in the standards adopted by contemporary political theory. And there is no difference in the principles enunciated by the statesmen of both sides on this matter. And President Wilson's four new Points of the 4th July, except where they break into hyperbole once or twice, will not arouse any opposition on our part. On the contrary, we feel that we can acquiesce in them warmly and extensively. Nobody would grudge his appreciation or co-operation to that genius of humanity. But that is not what is at stake ; it is rather what we are to understand by these " goods " of humanity. And that is what both parties should endeavour honourably to settle by mutual agreement.

But not in the way in which, for instance, our peace arrangements in the East are judged. After all, our enemies were invited to take part in them, and they could have seen to it that they should have a different conclusion.

Their criticism is now on a weak footing, for there is no ground entitling them to condemn conditions of peace which were either acceptable or inevitable for the parties concerned.

Our other opponents, to judge by the confident note of their public statements, do not appear to fear defeat.

If, nevertheless, they bring up these peace treaties as a terrifying example of our manner of dealing with conquered enemies, while we cannot recognise the accusation as having any justification in fact, we must also remind them that none of the states at war need ever get into the position of Russia or Rumania, as we are ready at any moment to enter into peace negotiations with all those who are in arms against us.

In constantly demanding expiation for wrongs we have done, and " reparations," our enemies are advancing a claim which we might put forward against them with a far greater degree of justification, for it is we who have been attacked, and the damages which we have suffered are the first that should be made good. But it is scarcely likely that the solution of the terribly confused problems of the war will be impeded by this set of questions.

On the other hand, the obstinacy with which territorial claims

in Alsace-Lorraine, Trient and Trieste, the German Colonies, etc., are advanced appears to be insuperable. To these lengths our willingness to conclude peace will not go ; we are prepared to discuss anything, provided our own possessions are left intact.

The enemy would sever from Austria-Hungary not only what he desires himself. The internal structure of the monarchy is also to be attacked, and it is to be split up as far as possible into its component parts. When it was perceived that ordinary methods of warfare were not sufficient to ensure our subjugation, interest in our internal affairs was suddenly stimulated to an extraordinary degree. So late in the war was it before the Entente realised their feelings on this matter that many enemy statesmen are glibly advancing as war aims nationality problems of the monarchy of whose existence they had not the slightest suspicion before the war. This is sufficiently obvious from the amateurish and superficial manner in which these complicated problems are discussed and "solved" by the other side.

But the matter had its uses. Our opponents organised it as they organised the blockade, and there is now actually a Minister for Propaganda in England.

Without any moral indignation or sense of grievance I would merely record the fact that this was their policy. The selection of this method of attack does not indicate any excessive belief in the success of all the efforts they have made hitherto. We trust that it will fail to achieve its object.

Our opponents proceed from a purely mechanical consideration of the essential nature of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. In their satisfaction over its difficult though purely momentary internal problems, they overlook the fact that as a general rule states with various nationalities are not formed fortuitously, but are the products of historical and folk-geographical necessity, governing their birth and their continued existence. They must therefore also possess, as is particularly true of Austria and Hungary, the necessary elasticity and adaptability to changing periods and the capacity of reforming themselves in accordance with the needs of their stage of development at any particular time : they must be able to deal with their internal problems without the assistance of uncalled-for interference from abroad.

Our enemies are endeavouring by means of the propaganda offensive to cripple us internally and to make us defenceless. They want to destroy a strong and ancient organism so that they make the individual portions subservient to their aims.

They are content for half of the population of Austria-Hungary to go under. This senseless war must be continued in order to make the other half happy after their unasked-for prescription.

The states and peoples of the monarchy will deal with their internal tasks in agreement with their sovereign as they always have done in the course of the centuries. The monarchy decisively declines foreign intervention in any form, as itself it abstains from interference in the affairs of others.

We have never laid down programmes according to which our enemies shall deal with their internal questions, and if we have ever called attention to the fact that everything was not for sheer peace and contentment at home as far as they are concerned, that there is Ireland, Egypt, India, etc., we have done so only by way of reciprocity with the suggestion that they should put their own house in order.

Enemy propaganda is not content with endeavouring to stir our peoples up against each other. It has not even shrunk from fostering suspicion between the peoples of monarchy and the hereditary dynasty by the dissemination of monstrous and contemptible slanders. It is scarcely necessary to characterise such a method of attack. Our peoples have indignantly repudiated advances on these lines. May it be branded for all time.

We must continue our defensive struggle up to the end until it achieves for us the necessary security for a peaceful existence in the future. But we must not regard this contest to which we are forced as eliminating the necessity for continuing our diplomatic efforts to promote wherever possible the objects for which we are fighting, but without in any way slackening in the prosecution of the war.

Let us avoid the phrase "peace offensive" with its usual implication of using unfair means in order to provide a substitute for success in the field.

It is strange, however, that even in public discussions the efforts of diplomacy and of war are often regarded as appertaining

to distinct fields of endeavour which may follow one another and condition each other, but as incapable of being prosecuted simultaneously.

In war fighting and diplomacy serve the same purpose. The one cannot exclude the other. At each step diplomatic activity will have due regard to military considerations. The results of the fighting will have the deciding influence upon its methods of procedure.

On the other hand it is the duty of diplomacy to be constantly on the look-out and to take advantage of any opportunities for effective action. That indeed is all that is meant by the Central Powers' readiness for peace. It is not in the least inconsistent with our determination to resist to the bitter end. But in the noise of battle, no less than during the quieter intervals, even without making new peace offers our policy will always be actuated by the fact that we regard this war as a senseless and unnecessary bloodshed which could at any moment be ended if our opponents would recover their sense of humanity. Inasmuch as they are not out for accessions of territory our enemies are fighting against windmills. They are exhausting their own resources and ours in order to establish upon the ruins of civilisation a new world order, the practical ideals of which are warmly approved by us and could be achieved much more easily and completely through the peaceful co-operation of all peoples.

In spite of everything we turn our gaze more and more hopefully upon the peoples who are unhostile to us in the expectation that they will rouse themselves from the infatuation which after the terrible trials of four years of war drives the world farther and farther along the road of destruction. All that is wanted is an act of will.

It is true that this war is causing us severe suffering. But hard though our lot be, it cannot weaken our resolution to continue fighting for our rights until the enemy desists from his deceptive, because falsely applied, ideology and from his arrogant determination to ruin us.

In these grave moments of our history our confidence rests firmly in our allies who are pursuing with us identical aims of defence, and especially in our ancient alliance with Germany

which in peace as well as in war has proved such a blessing. It is the unanimous wish of the peoples under its wing that it shall in the future, too, furnish the secure basis upon which we may struggle out of the world crisis, and then in the strength of our mutual support undertake the work of reconstruction and enter upon a new constitutional and economic era of peace, hope and security.

The conclusion of the alliance in 1879 had created nothing new: it was but the solemn confirmation of relationships which had arisen out of the deep insight of the two neighbouring Powers and of their political leaders and which corresponded to the needs of their peoples. In the same way the experiences of a long period of alliance in work and danger have deeply affected the common consciousness, and are leading Austria-Hungary and Germany to seek the path of the extension of the alliance in such a way as to adapt to all the needs of the new period, while remaining firm in the spirit of the old treaty.

To develop the relations between Austria-Hungary and Germany on closer and more intimate lines is the essential aim of the allied sovereigns and their governments; in this they are conscious of expressing the wishes of the overwhelming majority of their peoples.

In the future, too, the alliance shall preserve its exclusively defensive character. And it shall be firmly based upon the satisfactory solution of all the problems and needs arising out of the war which affect us jointly.

The new alliance therefore shall not merely have regard to the diplomatic relationships of the two Powers, but shall also be the occasion for developing on closer lines our economic and military relations, and adapting them to the altered circumstances and to the experience which we have gained; it will also have to find a solution for the questions connected with the rebirth of Poland: having due regard for the wishes of the population. There is thus a whole series of highly important groups of questions for all of which a simultaneous solution must be found by agreement: completely satisfactory to both parties, though separate instruments must be drawn up.

With regard to the negotiations necessary for attaining this extensive object, the fundamental principles underlying all the

agreements must be sincere loyalty to the alliance, together with the most careful regard, both in form and matter, for the sovereignty and for the complete independence and equality of the contracting Powers.

In the future, too, the alliance shall not imply a menace or hostility to any other party. It shall not contain anything which might be calculated to lead to the formation of counter-groups.

In so far as the exalted idea of a universal league of nations may be realised in the future, our alliance shall not prove an obstacle to it, but shall be an adaptable nucleus which can readily be incorporated with any universal combination based upon similar principles.

After what I have said it is scarcely necessary to emphasise the fact that we hope and expect to remain in the closest association after the war with our allies Bulgaria and Turkey.

What we stated on the 12th December 1916 still represents our point of view. Though the world may have been terribly altered by the recent events, we still carry on as determinedly as ever our war of defence, sanctified by innumerable sacrifices, though we are always ready to come to an understanding which "secures the honour, the existence and the freedom of development of our peoples."

The further continuance of the war is attributable entirely to the spirit of annihilation which animates the enemy statesmen. Their peoples are fettered by catchwords which may have been meant sincerely but are wrongly applied, and at the same time the most inconsistent means are advocated for carrying out the ideas which they represent.

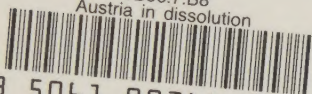
On their bloodstained path our enemies set themselves a goal which can only be achieved upon the ruins of a world. The strong defence of ourselves and our allies offer a guarantee that this shall not happen.

In conclusion let us bear in mind the words of our sublime ruler, contained in his reply to the Holy Father's peace Note of the 1st August of last year :

"We are striving for a peace which shall free the life of peoples in the future from hatred and the desire for revenge, and shall secure them for generations from the resort to arms."

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